

CLARISSA:
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF A
YOUNG LADY:
Comprehending
The most Important CONCERNS
OF
PRIVATE LIFE.

IN SEVEN VOLUMES.

By Mr. SAMUEL RICHARDSON,
Author of PAMELA, and Sir CHARLES GRANDISON.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

VOL. III.

DUBLIN:

Printed by J. POTTS, at Swift's-head, in Dame-street.
MDCCCLXVI.





THE
HISTORY
OF
Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER I.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Tuesday Night.

I THINK myself obliged to thank you, my dear Miss Howe, for your condescension, in taking notice of a creature, who has occasioned you so much scandal.

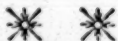
I am grieved on this account, as much, I verily think, as for the evil itself.

Tell me—But yet I am afraid to know—what your mamma said.

I long, and yet I dread to be told, what the young ladies my companions, now never more, perhaps, to be so, say of me.

They cannot, however, say worse of me than I will of myself. Self-accusation shall flow in every line of my narrative, where I think I am justly censurable.

If any thing can arise from the account I am going to give you, for extenuation of my fault [For that is, all a person can hope for, who cannot excuse herself], I know I may expect it from your friendship, tho' not from the charity of any other: Since, by this time, I doubt not, every mouth is opened against me; and all that know Clarissa Harlowe, condemn the fugitive daughter.



AFTER I had deposited my letter to you, written down to the last hour, as I may say, I returned to the Ivy summer-house; first taking back my letter from the loose bricks: And there I endeavoured, as coolly as my situation would permit, to recollect, and lay together, several incidents that had passed between my aunt and me; and, comparing them with some of the contents of my cousin Dolly's letter, I began to hope, that I need not be so very apprehensive, as I had been, of the next Wednesday. And thus I argued with myself.

' Wednesday cannot possibly be the day they intend, altho' to intimidate me, they may wish me to think it is:—For the settlements are unsigned: Nor have they been offered me to sign. I can choose whether I will, or will not, put my hand to them; hard as it will be to refuse, if my father tender them to me.—Besides, Did not my father and mother propose, if I made compulsion necessary, to go to my uncle's themselves, in order to be out of the way of my appeals? Whereas they intend to be present on Wednesday. And, however affecting to me, the thought of meeting them, and all my friends, in full assembly, is, perhaps it is the very thing I ought to wish for: Since my brother and sister had such an opinion of my interest in them, that they got me excluded from their presence, as a measure which they thought previously necessary to carry on their designs.

' Nor have I reason to doubt, but that (as I had before argued with myself) I shall be able to bring

over

‘ over some of my relations to my party ; and, being
‘ brought face to face with my brother, that I shall
‘ expose his malevolence, and, of consequence,
‘ weaken his power.

‘ Then, supposing the very worst, challenging the
‘ minister, as I shall challenge him, he will not pre-
‘ sume to proceed : Nor, surely, will Mr. Solmes
‘ dare to accept my refusing and struggling hand.
‘ And, finally, if nothing else will do, nor procure
‘ me delay, I can plead scruples of conscience, and
‘ even pretend prior obligation : for, my dear, I have
‘ given Mr. Lovelace room to hope [as you will see in
‘ one of my letters in your hands], that I will be no
‘ other man’s while he is single, and gives me not
‘ wilful and premeditated cause of offence against
‘ him ; and this in order to rein-in his resentments
‘ on the declared animosity of my brother and uncles.
‘ And as I shall appeal, or refer my scruples on this
‘ head, to the good Dr. Lewin, it is impossible but
‘ that my mamma and aunt (if nobody else) should
‘ be affected with this plea.’

Revolving cursorily these things, I congratulated myself, that I had resolved against going away with Mr. Lovelace.

I told you, my dear, that I would not spare myself ; and I enumerate these particulars, as an argument to condemn the action I have been so unhappily betrayed into. An argument that concludes against me with the greater force, as I must acknowledge, that I was apprehensive, that what my cousin Dolly mentions as from Betty and from my sister, was told *her*, that she should tell *me*, in order to make me desperate, and, perhaps, to push me upon some such step as I have been drawn in to take, as the most effectual means to ruin me with my father and uncles.

God forgive me, if I judge too hardly of their views !---But if I do *not*, I must say, they have laid a wicked snare for me ; and that I have been caught in

it.---And doubly may they triumph, if they *can* triumph, in the ruin of a sister, who never wished or intended hurt to them !

As the above kind of reasoning had lessened my apprehensions as to the Wednesday, it added to those I had of meeting Mr. Lovelace.---Now, as it seemed, not only the nearest, but the heaviest evil ; principally, indeed, because *nearest* ; for little did I dream [foolish creature that I was, and every way beset !] of the event proving what it has proved. I expected a contention with him, 'tis true, as he had not my letter : But I thought it would be very strange, as I mentioned in one of my former (a), if I, who had so steadily held out against characters so venerable, against authorities so sacred, as I may say, when I thought them unreasonably exerted, should not find myself more equal to such a trial as this ; especially, as I had so much reason to be displeased with him for not having taken away my letter.

On what a point of time, may one's fate depend ! Had I had but two hours more to consider of the matter, and to attend to and improve upon these new lights, as I may call them---But even then, perhaps, I might have given him a meeting.---Fool that I was, what had I to do, to give him hope, that I would *personally* acquaint him with the reason for my change of mind, if I did change it ?

O my dear ! an obliging temper is a very dangerous temper !---By endeavouring to gratify others, it is evermore disobliging itself !

When the bell rang to call the servants to dinner, Betty came to me, and asked, If I had any commands before she went to hers ; repeating her hint, that she should be *employed* ; adding, that she believed it was expected, that I should not come up till she came down, or till I saw my aunt or Miss Hervey.

I asked her some questions about the cascade, which
had

(a) See Vol. ii. p. 295.

had been out of order, and lately mended ; and expressed a curiosity to see how it played, in order to induce her [How cunning to cheat myself, as it proved !] to go thither, if she found me not where she left me : it being at a part of the garden most distant from the Ivy summer-house.

She could hardly have got into the house, when I heard the first signal—O how my heart fluttered !—But no time was to be lost. I stepped to the garden-door ; and, seeing a clear coast, unbolted the already-unlocked door.—And there was he, all impatience, waiting for me !

A panic, next to fainting, seized me, when I saw him. My heart seemed convulsed ; and I trembled so, that I should hardly have kept my feet, had he not supported me.

Fear nothing, dearest creature, said he !—Let us hasten away ! The chariot is at hand !—And, by this sweet condescension, you have obliged me beyond expression, or return !

Recovering my spirits a little, as he kept drawing me after him, O Mr. Lovelace, said I, I cannot go with you !—*Indeed* I cannot !—I wrote you word so !—Let go my hand, and you shall see my letter. It has lain there from yesterday morning, till within this half-hour.—I bid you watch to the last for a letter from me, lest I should be obliged to revoke the appointment ; and, had you followed the direction, you would have found it.

I have been watched, my dearest life, said he, half out of breath !—I have been watched in every step I took : And my trusty servant has been watched too, ever since Saturday ; and dared not to come near your wall.—And here we shall be discovered in a moment !—Speed away, my charmer !—This is the moment of your deliverance !—If you neglect this opportunity, you *never* can have such another !

What is it you mean, Sir!—Let go my hand : For I tell you [struggling vehemently], that I will sooner die than go with you !—

Good God, said he ! with a look of wildness and surprize, what is it I hear !—But [still drawing me after him as he retreated farther from the door] it is no time to argue—By all that's good you must go !—Surely you cannot doubt my honour, nor give me cause to question your own.

As you value me, Mr. Lovelace, urge me no farther. I come fixed and resolved. Let me give you the letter I had written. My further reasons shall follow : and they will convince you, that I ought not to go.

Nothing, Madam, can convince me—By all that's sacred, I will not leave you ! To leave you now, is to lose you for ever !

Am I to be thus compelled ? interrupted I, with equal indignation and vehemence—Let go my hands—I am resolved not to go with you—And I will convince you, that I *ought* not.

All my friends expect you, Madam !—All your own are determined against you !—Wednesday next is the day ! the important, perhaps the fatal day ! Would you stay to be Solmes's wife ?—Can this be your determination at last ?

No, never, never will I be that man's—But I will not go with you !—[Draw me not thus !—How dare you, Sir ?—] I would not have seen you, but to tell you so !—I had not met you, but for fear you would have been guilty of some rashness !—And, once more, I will *not* go !—What mean you !—Striving with all my force to get from him.

What can have possessed my angel, said he, quitting my hands, and with a gentler voice, that after so much ill-usage from your relations ; vows so solemn on my part ; an affection so ardent ; you stab me with a refusal to stand by your own appointment !

We

We have no time to talk, Mr. Lovelace, I will give you my reasons at a better opportunity. I cannot go with you now——And, once more, urge me no farther.——Surely I am not to be compelled by every body!

I see how it is, said he, with a dejected, but passionate air—What a severe fate is mine!—At length your spirit is subdued!—Your brother and sister have prevailed; and I must give up all my hopes to a wretch so *truly* despicable.——

Once more I tell you, interrupted I, I never will be his—All may end on Wednesday differently from what you expect.——

And it may *not*!—And then, good heaven!——

It is to be their last effort, as I have reason to believe.——

And I have reason to believe so too!—Since, if you stay, you will inevitably be Solmes's wife.

Not so, interrupted I.—I have obliged them in one point——They will be in good humour with me. I shall gain time at least—I am sure I shall——I have several ways to gain time.

And what, Madam, will gaining time do?—It is plain you have not a hope beyond that!—It is plain you have not, by putting all upon that precarious issue.——O my dearest, dearest life! let me beseech you not to run a risque of this consequence. I can convince you, that it will be *more* than a risque, if you go back, that you will, on Wednesday next, be Solmes's wife.—Prevent therefore, now that it is in your power to prevent, the fatal mischiefs that will follow such a dreadful certainty.

While I have any room for hope, it concerns *your* honour, Mr. Lovelace, as well as mine [if you have the proper value for me, and wish me to believe you have], that my conduct in this great point shall justify my prudence.

Your

Your prudence, Madam! When has that been questionable? Yet what stead has either your prudence or your duty stood you in, with people so strangely determined?

And then he pathetically enumerated the different instances of the harsh treatment I had met with; imputing all to the malice and caprice of a brother, who set every-body against him: And insisting, that I had no other way to effect a reconciliation with my father and uncles, than by putting myself out of the power of my brother's inveterate malice.

Your brother's whole reliance, proceeded he, has been upon your easiness to bear his insults.—Your whole family will seek to *you*, when you have freed yourself from this disgraceful oppression:—When they know you are with those who *can*, and *will* right you, they will give up to you your own estate.—Why then, putting his arm round me, and again drawing me with a gentle force after him, do you hesitate a moment?—Now is the time—Fly with me then, I beseech you, my dearest creature! Trust your persecuted adorer.—Have we not suffered in the same cause? If any imputations are cast upon you, give me the honour, as I shall be found to deserve it, to call you mine; and, when you are so, shall I not be able to protect both your person and character?

Urge me no more, Mr. Lovelace, I conjure you.—You yourself have given me a hint, which I will speak plainer to, than prudence, perhaps, on any other occasion, would allow me to speak.—I am convinced, that Wednesday next [if I had time, I would give you my reasons] is not intended to be the day we had both so much dreaded: And if, after that day shall be over, I find my friends to be determined in Mr. Solmes's favour, I will then contrive some way to meet you with Miss Howe, who is not your enemy: And when the solemnity has passed, I shall think

think t
minal t
unimp

Dea

Nay

this n
though
what t

The

I am
much
you h
if you
creatu
distan
light

De

Solm
nour.

I d

I dou
oppo
was a

W

mom
shall
men
bly c

M

and
upon

T

will
thre

—S

deft
Y

pro

think that step a duty, which, *till* then, will be criminal to take: Since now my father's authority is unimpeached by any greater.

Dearest Madam—

Nay, Mr. Lovelace, if you now dispute!—If, after this more favourable declaration, than I had the thought of making, you are not satisfied, I shall know what to think both of your gratitude and generosity.

The case, Madam, admits not of this alternative. I am all gratitude upon it. I cannot express how much I should be delighted with the charming hope you have given me, were you not next Wednesday, if you stay, to be another man's. Think, dearest creature! what an heightening of my anguish the distant hope you bid me look up to, is, taken in this light!

Depend upon it, I will die sooner than be Mr. Solmes's. If you would have me rely upon *your* honour, why should you doubt of *mine*?

I doubt not your *honour*, Madam; your *power* is all I doubt. You never, never can have such another opportunity.—Dearest creature, permit me—And he was again drawing me after him.

Whither, Sir, do you draw me?—Leave me this moment—Do you seek to keep me till my return shall grow dangerous or impracticable?—This moment let me go, if you would have me think tolerably of you.

My happiness, Madam, both here and hereafter, and the safety of all your implacable family, depend upon this moment.

To Providence, Mr. Lovelace, and to the Law, will I leave the safety of my friends.—You shall not threaten me into a rashness that my heart condemns!—Shall *I*, to promote your happiness, as you call it, destroy all my future peace of mind?

You trifle with me, my dear life, just as our better prospects begin to open. The way is clear; just
now

now it is clear! —But you may be prevented in a moment.

What is it you doubt?—May I perish eternally, if your will shall not be a law to me in every thing!—All my relations expect you: Your own appointment calls upon you!—Next WEDNESDAY—Dearest creature!—think of next WEDNESDAY!—And what is it I urge you to, but to take a step that, sooner than any other, will reconcile you to all whom you have most reason to value in your family?

Let me judge for myself, Sir. Do not you, who blame my friends for endeavouring to compel me, *yourself* seek to compel me. I won't bear it.---Your earnestness gives me greater apprehensions, and greater reluctance!---Let me go back, then!---Let me, before it is too late, go back, that it may not be worse for both. What mean you by this forcible treatment?---Is it thus that I am to judge of the intire submission to my will, which you have so often vowed?---Unhand me this moment, or I will cry out for help.

I will obey you, my dearest creature! ——— And quitted my hand with a look full of tender despondency, that, knowing the violence of his temper, half-concerned me for him. Yet I was hastening from him, when, with a solemn air, looking upon his sword, but catching, as it were, his hand from it, he folded both his arms, as if a sudden thought had recovered him from an intended rashness.

Stay, one moment!----But one moment stay, O best beloved of my soul!---Your retreat is secure, if you *will* go: The key lies down at the door.---But, O Madam, next WEDNESDAY, and you are Mr. Solmes's!---Fly me not so eagerly!---Hear me but a few words.

When near the garden door, I stopped; and was the more satisfied, as I saw the key there, by which I could let myself in again at pleasure. But, being uneasy lest I should be missed, I told him I could stay

no longer: I had already stayed too long: That I would write to him all my reasons. And depend upon it, Mr. Lovelace, said I, just upon the point of stooping for the key, in order to return, I will die, rather than have that man. You know what I have promised, if I find myself in danger.

One word, Madam, however, one word more, approaching me, his arms still folded, as if (as I thought) he would not be tempted to mischief. — Remember only, that I come at your appointment, to redeem you, at the hazard of my life, from your gaolers and persecutors, with a resolution, God is my witness, or may he for ever blast me! [That was his shocking Imprecation] to be a father, uncle, brother, and, as I humbly hoped, in your own good time, a *husband* to you, all in one. But since I find you are so ready to cry out for *help* against me, which must bring down upon me the vengeance of all your family, I am contented to run all risques:—I will not ask you to retreat with *me*; I will attend you into the garden, and into the *house*, if I am not intercepted.—Nay, be not surprised, Madam! The help you would have called for, I will attend you to.—I will face them all: But not as a revenger, if they provoke me not too much. You shall see what I can further bear for your sake. And let us both see, if expostulation, and the behaviour of a gentleman to them, will not procure me the treatment due to a gentleman from them.

Had he offered to draw his sword upon himself, I was prepared to have despised him for supposing me such a poor novice, as to be intimidated by an artifice so common. But this resolution, uttered with so serious an air, of accompanying me in to my friends, made me gasp almost with terror.

What mean you, Mr. Lovelace, said I?—I beseech you leave me: Leave me, Sir, I beseech you.

Excuse me, Madam! I beg you to excuse me!—I have long enough skulked like a thief about these lonely walls!

walls!—Long, too
your brother, and
but heightens malice
this one chance for
morrow WEDNESDAY
by my tameness?—
shall see, Madam,
My sword shall be
he offered it to me
if you please, shall
is nothing, if I lose
shew me the way in
tho' to my fate! But
I receive it in your
—You shall see what
stooped, and took up
lock——But dropped
door, upon my ear

What can you mean?
Would you thus expose
expose me?—Is this
to take advantage thus

And I wept. I could

He threw himself
can bear, said he, what
feigned, his own eyes
can bear, to behold such
of my heart, and reveal
my hand with both hands
mand me *with* you, could
way I am all implicit
you know of your
determined malice against
vour to the man you
Madam, if you did
think there would be
place it where you wish
you know, to all you

ing, too long, have I borne the insults of
r, and others of your relations. Absence
s malice. I am desperate. I have but
ance for it; for is not the day after to-
EDNESDAY? I have encouraged virulence
enefs?—Yet *tame* I will still be!—You
Madam, what I will bear for your sake.
shall be put sheathed into your hands [And
to me in the scabbard]:—My heart,
shall afford a sheath to theirs:—Life
f I lose you.—Be pleased, Madam, to
e way into the garden. I will attend you,
ate! But too happy, be it what it will, if
n your presence. Lead on, dear creature!
see what I can bear for you.—And he
took up the key; and offered it to the
dropped it again, without opening the
my earnest expostulation to him.
you mean, Mr. Lovelace, said I?—
thus expose yourself?—Would you thus
Is this your generosity?—Is every-body
stage thus of the weakness of my temper?
pt. I could not help it.
himself upon his knees at my feet.—Who
d he, with an ardour that could not be
own eyes glistening, as I thought, Who
behold such sweet emotion?—O charmer
and respectfully still kneeling, he took
h both his, pressing it to his lips, com-
b you, command me *from* you; in every
implicit obedience!—But I appeal to all
f your relations cruelty to you, their
malice against me, and as determined fa-
man you tell me you hate.—And, oh!
you did not hate him, I should hardly
would be a merit in your approbation,
e you would—I appeal to every thing
all you have suffered, whether you have
not

not reason to be apprehensive of *that* Wednesday,
which is my terror!—Whether you can possibly have
such another opportunity.—The chariot ready: My
friends with impatience expecting the result of *your*
own appointment: A man whose will shall be intirely
your will, imploring you, thus on his knees implor-
ing you—to be *your own Mistress*; that is all: Nor
will I ask for your favour, but as upon full proof I
shall appear to deserve it:—O my beloved creature,
pressing my hand once more to his lips, let not such
an opportunity slip! You never, never, will have
such another!

I bid him rise: He 'rose; and I told him, that were
I not thus unaccountably hurried by his impatience,
I doubted not to convince him, that both he and I
had looked upon next Wednesday with greater appre-
hension than was necessary: And was proceeding to
give him my reasons; but he broke in upon me—

Had I, Madam, but the shadow of a probability
to hope what *you* hope, I would be all obedience and
resignation. But the licence is actually got: The
parson is provided: That pedant Brand is the man:
O my dearest creature, do these preparations mean
only a trial?

You know not, Sir, were the worst to be intend-
ed, and weak as you think me, what a spirit I have;
you know not what I can do, and how I can resist,
when I think myself meanly or unreasonably dealt
with: Nor do you know what I have already suffer-
ed, what I have already borne, knowing to whose
unbrotherly instigations all is to be ascribed.—

I may expect all things, Madam, interrupted he,
from the nobleness of your mind: But your spirits
may fail you. What may not be apprehended from
the invincible temper of a father so positive, to a
daughter so dutiful? Fainting will not save you:
They will not, perhaps, be sorry for such an effect of
their barbarity. What will expostulations signify

against a ceremony performed? Must not All, the dreadful All, follow, that is torture to my heart but to think of?—Nobody to appeal to, of what avail will your resistance be against the consequences of a rite witnessed to by the imposers of it; and those your nearest relations?

I was sure, I said, of procuring a delay at least, Many ways I had to procure delay.—Nothing could be so fatal to us both, as for me to be found with him.—My apprehensions on this score, I told him, grew too strong for my heart.—I should think very hardly of him, if he sought to detain me longer. But his acquiescence should engage my gratitude.

And then stooping to take up the key to let myself into the garden, he started, and looked as if he had heard somebody near the door, on the inside, clapping his Hand on his sword.

This frightened me so, that I thought I should have sunk down at his feet. But he instantly re-assured me: He thought, he said, he had heard a rustling against the door: But *had* it been so, the noise would have been stronger. It was only the effect of his apprehension for me.

And then taking up the key he presented it to me.—If you *will* go, Madam—Yet I cannot, cannot leave you!—I must enter the garden with you.—Forgive me, but I *must* enter the garden with you.

And will you, will you, thus ungenerously, Sir, take advantage of my fears!—of my wishes, to prevent mischief?—I, vain fool, to be concerned for every one; nobody for me!

Dearest creature! interrupted he, holding my hand, as I tremblingly offered to put the key to the lock—Let *me*, if you *will* go, open the door.—But once more, consider, that could you possibly obtain that delay, which seems to be your only dependence, whether you may not be closer confined? I know they have already had *that* in consideration. Will you not,
in

in this case, be prevented from corresponding either with Miss Howe, or with me?—Who then shall assist you in your escape, if escape you would?—From your chamber-window only permitted to view the garden you must not enter into, how will you wish for the opportunity you now have, if your hatred to Solmes continue?—But, alas! that cannot continue!—If you go back, it must be from the impulses of a yielding (which you'll call, a dutiful) heart, tired and teased out of your own will.

I have no patience, Sir, to be thus restrained!—Must I never be at liberty to follow my own judgment?—Be the consequence what it may, I will not be thus constrained.—And then freeing my hand, I again offered the key to the door.

Down the ready kneeler dropt between me and that: And can you, can you, Madam, once more on my knees let me ask you, look with an indifferent eye upon the evils that may follow? Provoked as I have been, and triumphed over as I shall be, if your brother succeeds, my own heart shudders, at times, at the thoughts of what *must* happen: And can *yours* be unconcerned! Let me beseech you, dearest creature! to consider all these things: and lose not this only opportunity.—My intelligence—

Never, Mr. Lovelace, interrupted I, give so much credit to the words of a traitor.—Your base intelligencer is but a servant: He may pretend to know more than he has grounds for, in order to earn the wages of corruption. You know not what contrivances I can find out.

I was offering the key to the lock, when, starting from his knees, with a voice of affrightment, loudly whispering, and as if out of breath, *They are at the door, my beloved creature!* And taking the key from me, he flew to it, and fluttered with it, as if he would double-lock it. And instantly a voice from within cried out, bursting against the door, as if to break it

open, the person repeating his violent pushes, *Are you there?—Come up this moment!—This moment!—Here they are—Here they are both together!—Your pistol this moment!—Your gun!—*Then another push, and another.—He at the same moment drew his sword, and clapping it naked under his arm, took both my trembling hands in his; and, drawing me swiftly after him, *Fly, fly, my charmer; this moment is all you have for it!* said he.—*Your brother!—Your uncles! or this Solmes!—*They will instantly burst the door!—*Fly, my dearest life! if you would not be more cruelly used than ever!—If you would not see two or three murders committed at your feet, fly, fly, I beseech you!*

O Lord!—Help, help, cried I, all amaze and confusion. Now behind me, now before me, now on this side, now on that, turned I my affrighted face, in the same moment; expecting a furious brother here, armed servants there, an enraged sister screaming, and a father armed with terror in his countenance, more dreadful than even the drawn sword which I saw, or those I apprehended. I ran as fast as he, yet knew not that I ran; my fears, adding wings to my feet, at the same time that they took all power of thinking from me. My fears, which probably would not have suffered me to know what course to take, had I not had him to urge and draw me after him: Especially as I beheld a man, who must have come out of the garden-door, keeping us in his eye, running in and then out of the garden, beckoning and calling to others, whom I supposed *he* saw, although the turning of the wall hindered *me* from seeing them; and whom I imagined to be my brother, my father, and their servants.

Thus terrified, I was got out of sight of the door in a very few minutes: And then, altho' quite breathless between running and apprehension, he put my arm under his, his drawn sword in the other hand, and

and hurried me on still faster : My voice, however, contradicting my action ; crying, No, no, no, all the while, straining my neck to look back, as long as the walls of the garden and park were within sight, and till he brought me to his uncle's chariot : Where attending were two armed servants of his own, and two of Lord M.'s, on horseback.

Here I must suspend my relation for a while : For now I am come to this sad period of it, my indiscretion stares me in the face : And my shame and my grief give me a compunction, that is more poignant, methinks, than if I had a dagger in my heart—To have it to reflect, that I should so inconsiderately give in to an interview, which, had I known either myself or him, or in the least considered the circumstances of the case, I might have supposed would put me into the power of his resolution, and out of that of my own reason.

For, might I not have believed, that *he*, who thought he had cause to apprehend, that he was on the point of losing a person who had cost him so much pains and trouble, would not hinder her, if possible, from returning ? That he, who knew I had promised to give him up for ever, if insisted on, as a condition of reconciliation, would not endeavour to put it out of my power to do so ?—In short, that he, who had artfully forbore to send for my letter [for he could not be watched, my dear], lest he should find in it a countermand to my appointment (as I myself could apprehend, although I profited not by the apprehension), would want a device to keep me with him till the danger of having our meeting discovered, might throw me absolutely into his power, to avoid my own worse usage, and the mischiefs which might have ensued, perhaps in my very sight, had my friends and he met ?

But if it shall come out, that the person within the garden was his corrupted implement, employed to frighten me away with him, do you think, my dear, that I shall not have reason to hate him and myself still more?—I hope his heart cannot be so deep and so vile a one: I hope it cannot! But how came it to pass, that one man could get out of the garden door, and no more? How, that that man kept aloof, as it were, and pursued us not; nor run back to alarm the house?—My fright, and my distance, would not let me be certain; but really this man, as I now recollect, had the air of that vile Joseph Leman.

O why, why, my dear friends!—But wherefore blame I them, when I had argued myself into a hope, not improbable, that even the dreadful trial I was to undergo so soon, might turn out better, than if I had been directly carried away from the presence of my once indulgent parents, who might possibly intend that trial to be the last I should have had?

Would to heaven, that I had stood it however!—Then, if I had afterwards done, what now I have been prevailed upon, or perhaps foolishly frightened to do, I should not have been stung so much by inward reproach, as now I am: And this would have been a great evil avoided!

You know, my dear, that your Clarissa's mind was ever above justifying her own failings by those of others. God forgive those of my friends who have acted cruelly by me! But their faults *are* their own, and not excuses for mine. And mine began early: For I ought not to have corresponded with him.

O the vile incroacher! how my indignation, at times, rises at him! Thus to lead a young creature (too much indeed relying upon her own strength) from evil to evil!—This last evil, although the remote, yet sure consequence of my first—my prohibited correspondence! By a father, *early* prohibited, tho' not by my mother.

How

How much more properly had I acted with regard to that correspondence, had I, once for all, when he was forbid to visit me, and I to receive his visits, pleaded the authority I ought to have been bound by, and denied to write to him !—But I thought I could proceed or stop as I pleased. I supposed it concerned me, more than any other, to be the arbitress of the quarrels of unruly spirits—And now I find my presumption punished !—Punished, as other sins frequently are, by *itself* !

As to this last rashness ; now, that it is too late, I plainly see how I ought to have conducted myself.—As he knew I had but one way of transmitting to him the knowledge of what befel me ; as he knew, that my fate was upon a crisis with my friends ; and that I had, in my letter to him, reserved the liberty of revoking ; I should not have been solicitous whether he had got my letter or not : When he had come, and found I did not answer his signal, he would presently have resorted to the loose bricks, and there been satisfied by the date of my letter, that it was his own fault, that he had it not before. But, governed by the same pragmatistical motives, which induced me to correspond with him at first, I was again afraid, truly, with my foolish and busy prescience, that the disappointment would have thrown him into the way of receiving fresh insults from the same persons ; which might have made him guilty of some violence to them. And so, to save him an *apprehended* rashness, I have rushed into a *real* one myself. And what vexes me more, is, that it is plain to me now, by all his behaviour, that he had as great a confidence in my weakness, as I had in my own strength. And so, in a point intirely relative to my honour, he has triumphed [Can I have patience to look at him !] ; for he has not been mistaken in me, while I have in myself !

Tell

Tell me, my dear Miss Howe, tell me truly, if your unbiassed heart does not despise me?—It must! for your mind and mine were ever *one*; and I despise *myself*!—And well I may: For could the giddiest and most inconsiderate girl in *England* have done worse than I shall appear to have done in the eye of the world? Since my crime will be known without the provocations, and without the artifices of the betrayer too [Indeed, my dear, he is a very artful man]; while it will be a high aggravation, that better things were expected from me, than from many others.

You charge me to marry the first opportunity.—Ah! my dear! *another* of the blessed effects of my folly!—That's as much in my power now as—as I am myself!—For can I give a sanction immediately to his deluding arts?—Can I *avoid* being angry with him for tricking me thus, as I may say [and as I have called it to him], out of myself!—For compelling me to take a step so contrary to all my resolutions, and assurances given to you; so dreadfully inconvenient to myself: so disgraceful and so grievous, as it must be, to my dear mamma, were I to be less regardful of any other!—You don't know, nor can you imagine, my dear, how I am mortified!—How much I am sunk in my own opinion!—I, that was proposed for an example, truly, to others!—O that I were again in my father's house, stealing down with a letter to you; my heart beating with expectation of finding one from you!



THIS is the Wednesday-morning I dreaded so much, that I once thought of it as my doomsday: But of the Monday, it is plain, I ought to have been most apprehensive. Had I stayed, and had the worst I dreaded happened, my friends would then have been answerable,

answerable, if any bad consequences had followed :-- But, now, I have this *one* consolation left me [a very sad one, you'll say], that I have cleared *them* of blame, and taken it all upon *myself* !

You will not wonder to see this narrative so dismally scrawled. It is owing to different pens and ink, all bad, and written by snatches of time, my hand trembling too with fatigue and grief.

I will not add to the length of it, by the particulars of his behaviour to me, and of our conversation at St. Albans, and since ; because those will come in course, in the continuation of my story ; which, no doubt, you will expect from me.

Only thus much I will say, that he is extremely respectful, even obsequiously so, at present, tho' I am so much dissatisfied with him, and myself, that he has hitherto had no great cause to praise my complaisance to him. Indeed, I can hardly, at times, bear the seducer in my sight.

The lodgings I am in, are inconvenient. I shall not stay in them : So it signifies nothing to tell you how to direct to me hither. And where my next may be, as yet I know not.

He knows that I am writing to you ; and has offered to send my letter, when finished, by a servant of his. But I thought I could not be too cautious, as I am now situated, in having a letter of this importance conveyed to you. Who knows what such a man may do ? So very wicked a contriver ! The contrivance, if a contrivance, so insolently mean !-- But I hope it is not a contrivance neither ! Yet be that as it will, I must say, that the *best* of him, and of my prospects with him, are bad : And yet, having enrolled myself among the too-late repenters, who shall pity me ?

Nevertheless, I will dare to hope for a continued interest in your affections [I shall be miserable indeed, if

if I may not !], and to be remembered in your daily prayers. I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever-affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER II.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOSEPH LEMAN.

Honest JOSEPH,

Sat. April 8.

AT length your beloved young Lady has consented to free herself from the cruel treatment she has so long borne. She is to meet me without the garden door, at about four o'clock on Monday afternoon; as I told you she had promised. She has confirmed her promise. Thank God, she has confirmed her promise !

I shall have a chariot-and-six ready in the by-road fronting the private path to Harlowe-paddock; and several of my friends and servants not far off, armed to protect her, if there be occasion: But every one charged to avoid mischief. That, you know, has always been my principal care

All my fear is, that when she comes to the point, the over-niceness of her principles will make her waver and want to go back: Altho' *her* honour is *my* honour, you know, and *mine* is *hers*. If she should, and I should be unable to prevail upon her, all your past services will avail nothing, and she will be lost to me for ever: The prey, then, of that cursed Solmes, whose vile stinginess will never permit him to do good to any of the servants of the family.

I have no doubt of your fidelity, honest Joseph; nor of your zeal to serve an injured gentleman, and an oppressed young lady. You see, by the confidence I repose in you, that I have *not*; more particularly, on this very important occasion, in which
your

your assistance may crown the work : For, if she wavers, a little innocent contrivance will be necessary.

Be very mindful, therefore, of the following directions : Take them into your heart. This will probably be your last trouble, until my beloved and I are joined in holy wedlock : And then we will be sure to take care of you. You know what I have promised. No man ever reproached me for breach of word.

These then, honest Joseph, are they :

Contrive to be in the garden in disguise, if possible, and unseen by your young Lady. If you find the garden-door unbolted, you'll know, that she and I are together, altho' you should not see her go out at it. It will be locked, but my key shall be on the ground, at the bottom of the door, without, that you may open it with yours, as it may be needful.

If you hear our voices parleying, keep at the door, till I cry Hem, hem, twice : But be watchful for this signal, for I must not hem very loud, lest she should take it for a signal : Perhaps, in struggling to prevail upon the dear creature, I may have an opportunity to strike the door hard with my elbow, or heel, to confirm you :—Then you are to make a violent burst against the door, as if you'd break it open, drawing backward and forward the bolt in a hurry : Then, with another push, but with more noise than strength, lest the lock give way, cry out (as if you saw some of the family), Come up, come up, instantly!--Here they are ! Here they are ! Hasten !—This instant hasten ! And mention swords, pistols, guns, with as terrible a voice, as you can cry out with. Then shall I prevail upon her, no doubt, if loth before, to fly : If I cannot, I will enter the garden with her, and the house too, be the consequence what it will. But so 'frighted, there is no question but she will fly.

When you think us at a sufficient distance [and I shall raise my voice, urging her swifter flight, that
you

you may guess at *that*,] then open the door with your key : But you must be sure to open it very cautiously, lest we should not be far enough off. I would not have her know you have a hand in this matter, out of my great regard to you.

When you have opened the door, take your key out of the lock, and put it in your pocket : Then stooping for mine, put it in the lock on the *inside*, that it may appear as if the door was opened by herself, with a key they'll suppose of my procuring (it being new), and left open by us. *

They should conclude she is gone off by her own consent, that they may not pursue us : That they may see no hopes of tempting her back again. In either case, mischief might happen, you know.

But you must take notice, that you are only to open the door with your key, in case none of the family come up to interrupt us, and before we are quite gone : For, if they do, you'll find by what follows, that you must not open the door at all. Let them, on breaking it open, or by getting over the wall, find my key on the ground, if they will.

If they do not come to interrupt us, and if you, by help of your key, come out, follow us at a distance, and, with uplifted hands, and wild and impatient gestures (running backward and forward, for fear you should come too near us ; and as if you saw somebody coming to your assistance), cry out, for Help---help, and to hasten. Then shall we be soon at the chariot.

Tell the family, that you saw me enter a chariot with her : A dozen, or more, men on horseback, attending us ; all arm'd ; some with blunderbusses, as you believe ; and that we took the quite contrary way to that we shall take.

You see, honest Joseph, how careful I am, as well as you, to avoid mischief.

Observe

Observe to keep at such a distance that she may not discover who you are. Take long strides to alter your gate; and hold up your head, honest Joseph; and she'll not know it to be you: Mens airs and gaits are as various, and as peculiar, as their faces. Pluck a stake out of one of the hedges; and tug at it, tho' it may come easy: This, if she turn back, will look terrible, and account for your not following us faster. Then returning with it, shoulder'd, brag to the family, what you would have done, could you have overtaken us, rather than your young Lady should have been carried off by such a——And you may call me names, and curse me. And these airs will make you look valiant, and in earnest. You see, honest Joseph, I am always contriving to give you reputation. No man suffers by serving me.

But, if our parley should last longer than I wish; and if any of her friends miss her, before I cry, Hem, hem, twice; then, in order to save yourself (which is a very great point with me, I'll assure you), make the same noise as above: But, as I directed before, open not the door with your key. On the contrary, wish for a key, with all your heart; but, for fear any of them should, by accident, have a key about them, keep in readiness half a dozen little gravel-stones, no bigger than peas, and thrust two or three slyly into the key-hole; which will hinder their key from turning round. It is good, you know, Joseph, to provide against every accident, in such an important case as this. And let this be your cry, instead of the other, if any of my enemies come in your sight, as you seem to be trying to burst the door open: O Lord, hasten! O Lord, hasten! Mr. Lovelace!—Mr. Lovelace!—And very loud.—And that shall quicken me more than it shall those you call to.—If it be Betty, and only Betty, I shall think worse of your art of making love (*a*), than of your fidelity, if you can't find

VOL. III.

D

a way

(*a*) See Vol. ii. p. 152.

away to amuse her, and put her upon a false scent.

You must tell them, that your young Lady seemed to run as fast off with me, as I with her. This will also confirm to them, that all pursuit is in vain. An end will be hereby put to Solmes's hopes: And her friends, after a while, will be more studious to be reconciled to her, than to get her back. So you will be an happy instrument of great good to all around. And This will one day be acknowledged by both families. You will then be every one's favourite: and every good servant, for the future, will be proud to be liken'd to honest Joseph Leman.

If she should guess at you, or find you out, I have it already in my head to write a letter, for you to copy (*a*); which, occasionally produced, will set you right with her.

This one time, be diligent, be careful; this will be the crown of all: And, once more, depend for a recompence upon the honour of

Your assured friend,

R. LOVELACE.

You need not be so much afraid of going too far with Betty. If you *should* make a match with her, she is a very likely creature, tho' a vixen, as you say. I have an admirable receipt to cure a termagant wife.—Never fear, Joseph, but thou shalt be master of thine own house. If she be very troublesome, I can teach thee how to break her heart in a twelvemonth; and *honestly* too;—or the precept would not be mine.

I inclose a new earnest of my future favour.

(*a*) See Letter xx. in this volume.

L E T-

L E T T E R III.

*To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esquier. His Honner.**Honnered Sir,**Sunday Morning, April 9.*

I Must confesse I am infinnitely oblided to your honner's bounty. But, this last command!—It seems so intricket!—Lord be merciful to me, how have I been led from littel stepps to grate stepps!—And iff I should be found out!—But your Honner says, you will take me into your Honner's farvise, and protect me, if as I should at any time be found out; and raise my wages besides; or set me upp in a good inne; which is my ambishion. And you will be honnerable, and kind to my dearest young Lady, God love her.—But who can be unkind to she?

I will do the best I am able, since your Honner will be apt to lose her, as your Honner says, if I do not; and a man so stindgie will be apt to gain her. But mayhap my dearest younge Lady will not make all this trouble needful. If she has promised, she will stand to it, I dare to say.

I love your Honner for contriveing to save mischiff so well. I thought till I know'd your Honner, that you was very mischevous, and plesse your Honner. But find it to be quite another thing. Your Honner, it is plane, means mighty well by every body, as far as I see. As I am sure I do myself; for I am, althoff a very plane Man, and all that, a very honest one, I thank my God. And have good principles, and have kept my young Lady's pressepts always in mind: For she goes no-where, but saves a soul or two, more or less.

So, commending myself to your Honner's further favour, not forgetting the inne, when your Hon-

ner shall so please, and a good one offers; for places are no inheritances now-a-days. And, I hope, your Honner will not think me a dishonest Man for savinge your Honner ageinst my duty, as it may look; but only as my conscience clears me.

Be pleased, howsomever, if it like your Honner, not to call me, *honneſt Joſeph*, and *honneſt Joſeph*, so often. For, althoff I think myself very honnest, and all that; yet I am touched a little, for fear I should not do the quite right thing: And too-besides, your Honner has such a fessehious way with you, as that I hardly know whether you are in jest, or earnest, when your Honner calls me honnest so often.

I am a very plane man, and seldom have writ to such honourable gentlemen; so you will be good enuff to pass by every thing, as I have often said, and need not now say over again.

As to Mrs. Betty; I tho'te, indede, she looked above me. But she comes on very well, nathelesse. I could like her better, if she was better to my young Lady. But she has too much wit for so plane a man. Natheless, if she was to angre me, althoff it is a shame to bete a woman; yet I colde make shift to throe my hat at her, or so, your Honner.

But that same reseit, iff your Honner so please, to cure a shrowish wife. It would more encurrege to wed, if so be one know'd it before-hand, as one may say. So likewise, iff one knoed one could *bonestly*, as your Honner says, and as of the handy-work of God, in *one twelve-month*——

But, I shall grow impertinent to such a grate man—And *hereafter* may do for that, as she turnes out.——For one mought be loth to part with her, mayhap, so *verry* soon too; especially if she was to make the notable lanlady your Honner put into my head.

But

Butt wonce moer, beging your Honner's parden,
and promissing all dilligence and exsacknesse, I reſte,

Your Honner's dewtifull ſarvant to cummande,

JOSEPH LEMAN.

L E T T E R I V.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq ;

St. Albans, Monday Night.

I Snatch a few moments, while my Beloved is retired (as I hope, to rest), to perform my promise. No pursuit !——Nor have I apprehensions of any ; tho' I must make my charmer dread that there will be one.

And now, let me tell thee, that never was joy so complete as mine !——

But let me inquire ! Is not the angel flown away ?——

✱ ✱

O no ! She is in the next apartment !—Securely mine !—Mine for ever !

O ecſtaſy !—My heart will burſt my breaſt,

To leap into her boſom !——

I knew, that the whole stupid family were in a combination to do my business for me. I told thee, that they were all working for me, like so many underground moles ; and still more blind than the moles are said to be, unknowing that they did so. I myself, the director of their principal motions ; which falling in with the malice of their little hearts, they took to be all their own.

But did I say, my joy was perfect ?—O no !—It receives some abatement from my disgusted pride. For how can I endure to think, that I owe more to her relation's persecutions, than to her favour for me ?—Or even, as far as I know, to her preference of me to another man ?

But let me not indulge this thought. Were I to do so, it might cost my charmer dear.—Let me rejoice,

that she has passed the Rubicon : that she cannot return : That, as I have ordered it, the flight will appear to the Implacables to be altogether with her own consent : And that, if I doubt her love, I can put her to tryals, as mortifying to her niceness, as glorious to my pride.—For, let me tell thee, dearly as I love her, if I thought there was but the shadow of a doubt in her mind, whether she preferr'd me to any man living, I would shew her no mercy.

Tuesday, Day-dawn.

BUT, on the wings of love, I fly to my chamber, who, perhaps, by this time, is rising, to encourage the tardy dawn. I have not slept a wink of the hour and half I lay down to invite sleep. It seems to me, that I am not so much Body, as to require such vulgar renovation.

But why, as in the chariot, as in the inn, at alighting, all heart-bursting grief, my dearest creature? So persecuted, as thou wert persecuted!—So much in danger of the most abhorr'd compulsion!—Yet grief so *unsuspectably* sincere for an escape so critical!—Take care!—Take care, O beloved of my soul; for jealous is the heart in which Love has erected a temple to thee.

Yet, it must be allowed, that such a sudden transition must affect her—Must ice her over.—When a little more used to her new situation : When her hurries are at an end : When she sees how religiously I shall observe all her INJUNCTIONS, she will undoubtedly have the gratitude to distinguish between the confinement she has escaped from, and the liberty she has reason to rejoice in.

She comes! She comes!—And the Sun is just rising to attend her!—Adieu!—Be half as happy as I am (for all difficulties, like night-fogs before the sun, disperse at her approach) ; and, next myself, thou wilt be the happiest man in the world.

L E T-

LETTER V.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.**Wednesday, April 12.***I** WILL pursue my melancholy story.

Being thus hurried to the chariot, it would have been to no purpose to have refused entering into it, had he not, in my fright, lifted me in, as he did : And it instantly drove away a full gallop, and stopt ~~not~~ till it brought us to St. Albans ; which was just as the day shut in.

I thought I should have fainted several times by the way. With lifted-up hands and eyes, God protect me, said I, often to myself !—Can it be I, that am here !—My eyes running over, and my heart ready to burst with sighs as involuntary as my flight.

How different, how inexpressibly different, the gay wretch ; visibly triumphing (as I could not but construe his almost rapturous joy) in the success of his arts ! But overflowing with complimentary flourishes, yet respectfully distant his address, all the way we *flew* ; for that, rather than *galloping*, was the motion of the horses ; which took, as I believe, a round-about way, to prevent being traced.

I have reason to think, there were other horsemen at his devotion ; three or four different persons, above the rank of servants, galloping by us, now-and-then, on each side of the chariot : But he took no notice of them ; and I had too much grief, mingled with indignation, notwithstanding all his blandishments, to ask any questions about them, or any thing else.

Think, my dear, what were my thoughts, on alighting from the chariot ; having no attendant of my own sex ; no cloaths but what I had on, and those little suited for such a journey as I had *already* taken, and was *still* to take : Neither hood nor hat,
nor

nor any thing but a handkerchief about my neck and shoulders : Fatigued to death : My mind still more fatigued than my body : And in such a foam the horses, that every one in the inn we put up at guests'd (they could not do otherwise) that I was a young giddy creature, who had run away from her friends. This it was easy to see, by their whispering and gaping ; more of the people of the house also coming in to view us, as it were by turns, than was necessary for the attendance.

The gentlewoman of the inn, whom he sent in to me, shewed me another apartment ; and, seeing me ready to faint, brought me hartshorn and water ; and then, upon my desiring to be left alone for half an hour, retired : For I found my heart ready to burst, on revolving every thing in my thoughts : And the moment she was gone, fastening the door, I threw myself into an old great chair, and gave way to a violent flood of tears ; which a little relieved me.

Mr. Lovelace, sooner than I wished, sent up the gentlewoman, who pressed me, in his name, to admit my Brother : or to come down to him : For he had told her, I was his Sister ; and that he had brought me, against my will, and without warning, from a friend's house, where I had been all the winter, in order to prevent my marrying against the consent of my friends ; to whom he was now conducting me ; and that, having given me no time for a travelling-dress, I was greatly offended at him.

So, my dear, your frank, your open-hearted friend, was forced to countenance this tale ; which, indeed, suited me the better, because I was unable, for some time, to talk, speak, or look up ; and so my dejection, and grief, and silence, might very well pass before the gentlewoman and her niece who attended me, as a fit of lulleness.

The room I was in being a bed-chamber, I chose, to go down, at his repeated message, attended by
the

the gentlewoman of the inn, to that in which he was. He approached me with great respect, yet not exceeding a brotherly politeness, where a brother *is* polite; and, calling me his dearest sister, asked after the state of my mind; and hoped I would forgive him; for never brother half so well loved a sister, as he me.

A wretch!—How naturally did he fall into the character, altho' I was so much out of mine!

Unthinking creatures have some comfort in the shortness of their views; in their unapprehensiveness; and that they penetrate not beyond the present moment: In short, that they *are* unthinking!—But, for a person of my thoughtful disposition, who has been accustomed to look forward, as well to the *possible*, as to the *probable*, what comfort can I have in my reflections?

But let me give you the particulars of our conversation, a little before and after our supper-time, joining both in one.

When we were alone, he besought me (I cannot say but with all the tokens of a passionate and respectful tenderness) to be better reconciled to myself, and to him: He repeated all the vows of honour, and inviolable affection, that he ever made me: He promised to be wholly governed by me in every future step: He asked me to give him leave to propose, Whether I chose to set out next day to either of his aunts?

I was silent. I knew not what to say, nor what to do.

Whether I chose to have private lodgings procured me, in either of those ladies neighbourhood, as were once my thoughts?

I was still silent.

Whether I chose to go to either of Lord M's seats; that of Berks, or that in the county we were in?

In lodgings, I said, any-where, where he was not to be.

He had promised This, he own'd ; and he would religiously keep to his word, as soon as he found all danger of pursuit over ; and that I was settled to my mind.—But, if the place were indifferent to me, London was the safest, and the most private : And his relations should all visit me there, the moment I thought fit to admit them. His cousin Charlotte, particularly, should attend me, as my companion, if I would accept of her, as soon as she was able to go abroad.—Mean time, would I go to to his aunt Lawrence's (his aunt Sadlier was a melancholy woman) ? I should be the most welcome guest she ever received.

I told him, I wished not to go (immediately, however, and in the frame I was in, and likely not to be out of) to any of his relations : That my reputation was concerned, to have *him* absent from me :—That, if I were in some private lodging (the meaner the less to be suspected, as it would be known, that I went away by his means ; and he would be supposed to have provided me handsome accommodations), it would be most suitable both to my mind and my situation : That this might be best, I should think, in the country for *me* ; in town for *him*.—And no matter how soon he was known to be there.

If he might deliver his opinion, he said, since I declined going to any of his relations, London was the only place in the world to be private in. Every new-comer in a country-town or village excited a curiosity : A person of my figure (and many compliments he made me) would excite more. Even messages and letters, where none used to be brought, would occasion inquiry. He had not provided a lodging anywhere, supposing I would choose to go either to London, where accommodations of that sort might be fixed upon in an hour's time ; or to his aunt's ; or to Lord M's in Hertfordshire seat, where was house-keeper an excellent woman, Mrs. Greine, such another as my Norton.

To be sure, I said, if I were pursued, it would be in their first passion; and some one of his relations houses would be the place they would expect to find me at.——I knew not what to do!

My pleasure should determine him, he said, be it what it would. Only that I were safe, was all he was solicitous about. He had lodgings in town; but he did not offer to propose them. He knew, I would have more objection to go to them, than I could have to go to Lord M's, or to his aunt's——

No doubt of it, I reply'd, with an indignation in my manner, that made him run over with professions, that he was far from proposing them, or wishing for my acceptance of them. And again he repeated, That my honour and safety were all he was solicitous about; assuring me, that my will should be a law to him, in every particular.

I was too peevish, and too much afflicted, and, indeed, too much incensed against him, to take well any thing he said.

I thought myself, I said, extremely unhappy. I knew not what to determine upon: My reputation now, no doubt, utterly ruin'd: Destitute of cloaths, fit to be seen by any-body: My very indigence, as I might call it, proclaiming my folly to every one who saw me: who would suppose, that I had been taken at advantage, or had given an undue one; and had no power over either my will or my actions: That I could not but think I had been artfully dealt with: That he had seem'd to have taken, what he might suppose, the just measure of my weakness, founded on my youth and inexperience: That I could not forgive myself for meeting him: That my heart bled for the distresses of my father and mother, on this occasion: That I would give the world, and all my hopes in it, to have been still in my father's house, whatever had been my usage: that, let him protest and vow what
he

he would, I saw something low and selfish in his love that he could study to put a young creature upon making such a sacrifice of her duty and conscience: When a person actuated by a generous love, must seek to oblige the object of it, in every thing essential to her honour, and to her peace of mind.

He was very attentive to all I said; never offering to interrupt me once. His answer to every article, almost methodically, shew'd his memory.

What I had said, he told me, had made him very grave: And he would answer accordingly.

He was grieved at his heart, to find that he had so little share in my favour or confidence.

As to my *reputation*, he must be very sincere with me: That could not suffer half so much by the step I so much regretted to have taken, as by the confinement, and equally foolish and unjust treatment, I had met with from my relations: That every mouth was full of blame of them, of my brother and sister particularly; and of wonder at my patience: That he must repeat, what he had written to me, he believed, more than once, That my friends themselves expected, that I should take a proper opportunity to free myself from their persecutions; why else did they confine me? That my exalted character would still bear me out, with those who knew *me*; who knew my *brother's* and *sister's* motives; and who knew the wretch they were for compelling me to have.

With regard to *cloaths*; who, as matters were circumstanced, could expect, that I should be able to bring away any others, than those I had on at the time? For *present* use or wear, all the Ladies of his family would take a pride to supply me: For *future*, the product of the best looms, not only in England, but throughout the world, were at my command.

If I wanted *money*, as no doubt I must, he should be proud to supply me: Would to God, he might presume to hope, there were but one interest between us!

And then he would fain have had me to accept of 100 *l.* bank note; which unawares to me, he put into my hand: but which, you may be sure, I refused with warmth.

He was inexpressibly grieved and surprised, he said, to hear me say, he had acted *artfully* by me. He came provided, according to my *confirm'd* appointment [A wretch! to upbraid me thus!], to redeem me from my persecutors; and little expected a change of sentiment, and that he should have so much difficulty to prevail upon me, as he had met with: That perhaps I might think his offer to go *into the garden with me*, and to face my assembled relations, was a piece of *art* only: But that if I did, I wronged him: For, to this hour, seeing my excessive uneasiness, he wish'd with all his soul, he had been permitted to accompany me in. It was always his maxim to brave a threatened danger---Threateners, where they have an opportunity to put in force their threats, were seldom to be feared.—But had he been assured of a private stab, or of as many death's wounds, as there were persons in my family (made desperate as he should have been by my return), he would have attended me into the house.

So, my dear, what I have to do, is to hold myself inexcusable for meeting such a determined and audacious spirit: that's all!—I have hardly any question now, that he would have contrived some way or other to have got me away, had I met him at a midnight hour, as once or twice I had thoughts to do.--And that would have been more terrible still!

He concluded this part of his talk, with saying, That he doubted not, but that, had he attended me in, he should have come off, in every-one's opinion, so well, that he should have had general leave to renew his visits.

He went on :—He must be so bold as to tell me, he said, that he should have paid a visit of this kind, but indeed accompany'd by several of his trusty friends, had I *not* met him—And that very afternoon too—for he could not tamely let the dreadful Wednesday come, without some effort to change their determinations.

What, my dear, was to be done with such a man !

That therefore, for my sake, as well as for his own, he had reason to wish a disease so desperate had been attempted to be overcome by as desperate a remedy. We all know, said he, that great ends are sometimes brought about by the very means by which they are endeavour'd to be frustrated.

My present situation, I am sure, thought I, affords a sad evidence of this truth !

I was silent all this time. My blame was indeed turned inward. Sometimes, too, I was half-frighted at his audaciousness : At others, had the less inclination to interrupt him, being excessively fatigued, and my spirits sunk to nothing, with the view even of the best prospects with such a creature.

This gave him opportunity to proceed ; And that he did ; assuming a still more serious air.

As to what further remained for him to say, in answer to what I had said, he hoped I would pardon him ; but, upon his soul, he was concerned, infinitely concerned, he repeated, his colour and his voice rising, that it was *necessary* for him to observe, how much I chose rather to have run the risque of being Solmes's wife, than to have it in my power to reward a man, who, I must forgive him, had been as much insulted on *my* account, as *I* had been on *his*—who had watched my commands, and (pardon me, madam) every *changeable* motion of your pen, all hours, in all weathers, and with a cheerfulness and ardor, that nothing but the most faithful and obsequious passion could inspire.

I now,

I now, Miss, began to revive into a little more warmth of attention.—

And all, madam, for what ? [How I stared !]—
Only to prevail upon you to free yourself from ungenerous and base oppression—

Sir, Sir ! indignantly said I—

Hear me but out, dearest madam !—My heart is full—I *must* speak what I have to say—To be told [for your words are yet in my ears, and at my heart !], that you would give the world, *and all your hopes in it*, to have been still in your cruel and gloomy father's house—

Not a word, Sir, against my papa !—I will not bear that—

Whatever had been your usage :—And you have a credulity, madam, against all probability, if you believe you should have avoided being Solmes's wife : That I have put you upon *sacrificing your duty and conscience*—Yet, dearest creature ! see you not the contradiction that your warmth of temper has surprized you into, when the reluctance you shewed to the last to leave your persecutors, has cleared your conscience from the least reproach of this sort.—

O Sir ! Sir ! are you so critical then ? Are you so light in your anger, as to dwell upon words !—

And indeed, my dear, I have since thought, that his anger was not owing to that sudden *impetus*, which cannot be easily bridled ; but rather, was a sort of *manageable* anger, let loose to intimidate me.

Forgive me, madam—I have just done—Have I not, in your own opinion, hazarded my life to redeem you from oppression ?—Yet is not my reward, after all, precarious ?—For, madam, have you not conditioned with me [and most sacredly, hard as the condition is, will I observe it], that all my hope must be remote : That you are determined to have it in your power to favour or reject me totally, as you please ? —

See, my dear ! In every respect my condition changed for the worse ! Is it in my power to take your advice, if I should think it ever so right to take it ?——

And have you not furthermore declared, proceeded he, that you will engage to renounce me for ever, if your friends insist upon that cruel renunciation, as the terms of being reconciled to you ?

But, nevertheless, madam, all the merit of having saved you from an odious compulsion, shall be mine. I glory in it, though I were to lose you for ever—As I see I am but too likely to do, from your present displeasure ; and especially if your friends insist upon the terms you are ready to comply with.

That you are *your own mistress*, thro' my means, is, I repeat, my boast.—As such, I humbly implore your favour—And that only upon the conditions I have yielded to hope for it.—As I do now *thus humbly* [the proud wretch falling on one knee] your forgiveness, for so long detaining your ear, and for all the plain-dealing that my undefining heart would not be denied to utter by my lips.

O Sir, pray rise !——Let the *obliged* kneel, if one of us must kneel !——But, nevertheless, proceed not in this strain I *beseech* you. You have had a great *deal* of trouble about me : But had you let me known in time, that you expected to be rewarded for it at the price of my duty, I should have spared you much of it.

Far be it from me, Sir, to depreciate merit so *extraordinary*. But let me say, that had it not been for the forbidden correspondence I was teized by you into [and which I had not continued (every letter for many letters intended to be the last), but because I thought you a sufferer from my friends], I had not been either confined or ill-treated : Nor would my brother's low-meant violence have had a foundation to work upon.

I am

I am far from thinking my case would have been so very desperate as you imagine, had I stay'd. My father loved me at bottom: He would not see me before; and I wanted only to *see* him, and to be *heard*; and a delay of his sentence was the least thing I expected from the trial I was to stand.

You are boasting of your merits, Sir; let merit *be* your boast: Nothing else can attract me. If *personal* considerations had principal weight with me, either in Solmes's disfavour, or in your favour, I should despise *myself*: If you value yourself upon them, in preference to the person of the poor Solmes, I shall despise *you*!

You may glory in your fancied merits, in getting me away: But the cause of *your* glory, I tell you plainly, is *my* shame.

Make to yourself a title to my regard, which I can better approve of; or else you will not have so much merit with *me*, as you have with *yourself*.

But here, like the first pair, I, at least, driven out of my paradise, are we recriminating. No more shall you need to tell me of your *sufferings*, and your *merits*!—Your *All hours*, and *All weathers*! For I will bear them in memory, as long as I live; and, if it be impossible for me to *reward* them, be ever ready to *own* the obligation. All that I desire of you, now, is, to leave it to myself to seek for some private abode: To take the chariot with you to London or elsewhere: And, if I have any further occasion for your assistance and protection, I will signify it to you, and be still *further* obliged to you.

You are warm, my dearest life!—But indeed there is no occasion for it. Had I any views unworthy of my faithful love for you, I should not have been so honest in my declarations.

Then he began again to vow the sincerity of his intentions.

But I took him up short : I am willing to *believe* you, Sir. It would be insupportable but to suppose there were a *necessity* for such solemn declarations [At this he seemed to collect himself, as I may say, into a little more circumspection.] If I thought there *were*, I would not sit with you here, in a public inn, I assure you, altho' *cheated* hither, as far as I know, by methods [You must excuse me, Sir !] that, the very suspicion that it may be so, gives me too much vexation, for me to have patience either with you or with myself.—But no more of this just now : Let me but know, I beseech you, *good Sir*, bowing [I was very angry !], if you intend to leave me ; or if I have only escaped from one confinement to another ?—

Cheated hither, as far as you know, madam ! Let you *know* (and with that air too, charming, though grievous to my heart !) *if you have only escaped from one confinement to another !*—— Amazing ! perfectly amazing !—And can there be a necessity for me to answer this ?—You are absolutely your own mistress.—It were very strange, if you were not. The moment you are in a place of safety, I will leave you.--- One condition only, give me leave to beg your consent to : It is this : That you will be pleased, now you are so intirely in your own power, to renew a promise *voluntarily* made before ; *voluntarily*, or I would not *now* presume to request it ; for although I would not be thought capable of growing upon concession, yet I cannot bear to think of losing the ground your goodness had given me room to hope I had gained ; ‘ That, make up how you please with your ‘ relations, you will never marry any other man, ‘ while I am living and single, unless I should be so ‘ wicked as to give new cause for high displeasure.’

I hesitate not to confirm this promise, Sir, upon your *own* condition. In what manner do you expect me to confirm it ?——

Only,

Only, Madam, by your word.

Then I never will.

He had the assurance [I was now in his power] to salute me, as a sealing of my promise, as he called it. His motion was so sudden, that I was not aware of it. It would have looked affected to be very angry; yet I could not be pleased, considering this as a leading freedom, from a spirit so audacious and incroaching; and he might see, that I was not.

He passed all that by with an air peculiar to himself — Enough! enough, dearest madam! — And let me beg of you but to conquer this dreadful uneasiness, which gives me to apprehend but too-too much for my jealous love to bear: And it shall be my whole endeavour to deserve your favour, and to make you the happiest woman in the world, as I shall be the happiest of men.

I broke from him to write to you my preceding letter; but refused to send it by his servant, as I told you. The gentlewoman of the inn help'd me to a messenger, who was to carry what you should give him to Lord M's seat in Hertfordshire, directed for Mrs. Greme the housekeeper there. And early in the morning, for fear of pursuit, we were to set out that way: and there he proposed to exchange the chariot-and-fix for a chaise-and-pair of his own, which happened to be at that seat, as it would be a less-noticed conveyance.

I looked over my little stock of money; and found it to be no more than seven guineas and some silver: The rest of my stock was but fifty guineas, and that five more than I thought it was, when my sister challenged me as to the sum I had by me (a): And those I left in my escritoire, little thinking to be prevailed upon to go away with him.

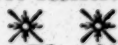
Indeed my case abounds with a shocking variety of indelicate circumstances. Among the rest, I was forced

(a) See Vol. i. p. 292, 293.

forced to account to *him*, who knew I could have no cloaths but what I had on, how I came to have linen with you [for he could not but know I sent for it]; lest he should imagine I had an early design to go away with him, and made that a part of the preparation.

He most heartily wished, he said, for my mind's sake, that your mamma would have afforded me her protection; and delivered himself, upon this subject, with equal freedom and concern.

There are, my dear Miss Howe, a multitude of punctilios and decorums, which a young creature must dispense with, who, in such a situation, makes a man the intimate attendant of her person. I could now, I think, give twenty reasons stronger than any I have heretofore mentioned, why women of the least delicacy should never think of incurring the danger and disgrace of taking the step I have been drawn in to take, but with horror and aversion: and why they should look upon the man who shall tempt them to it, as the vilest and most selfish of seducers.



BEFORE five o'clock (Tuesday morning) the maid-servant came up to tell me, my *brother* was ready, and that breakfast also waited for me in the parlour. I went down with a heart as heavy as my eyes, and received great acknowledgments and compliments from him on being so soon dress'd, and ready, as he interpreted it, to continue our journey.

He had the thought which I had not [For what had I to do with thinking, who had it not, when I stood most in need of it?] to purchase for me a velvet hood, and a handsome short cloak, trimm'd with silver, without saying any thing to me. He must reward himself, the artful incroacher said, before the landlady and her maids and niece, for his forethought; and would salute his pretty fullen sister! — He took
his

his reward ; and, as he said, a tear with it. While he assured me [still before them, a vile wretch !] that I had nothing to fear from meeting with parents, who so dearly loved me.——How could I be complainant, my dear, to such a man as this ?—

As soon as the chariot drove on, he asked me, whether I had any objection to go to Lord M.'s Hertfordshire seat ? His Lordship, he said, was at his Berkshire one.

I told him, I chose not to go, as yet, to any of his relations ; for that would indicate a plain defiance to my own——My choice was, to go to a private lodging, and for him to be at a distance from me ; at least, till I heard how things were taken by my friends—So that altho' I had but little hopes of a reconciliation, as it *was* ; yet if they knew I was in his protection, or in that of any of his friends (which would be looked upon as the same thing) there would not be room for any at all.

I should govern him as I pleased, he solemnly assured me, in every thing. But he still thought London was the best place for me ; and if I were once safe there, and in a lodging to my liking, he would go to M. Hall. But, as I approved not of London, he would urge it no further.

He proposed, and I consented, to put up at an inn in the neighbourhood of *The Lawn* (as he called Lord M.'s seat in this county), since I chose not to go thither. And here I got two hours to myself ; which I told him I should pass in writing another letter to you [meaning my narrative, which I had begun at St. Albans, fatigued as I was], and in one to my sister, to apprise the family (whether they were solicitous about it or not), that I was well ; and to beg that my cloaths, some particular books, and the fifty guineas I had left in my escritoire, might be sent me.

He asked, if I had considered whither to have them directed ?

Indeed

Indeed not I, I told him, I was a stranger to—
So was he, he interrupted me; but it struck him
by chance—[Wicked story-teller!]

But, added he, I will tell you, madam, how it
shall be managed—If you don't choose to go to
London, it is, nevertheless, best, that your relations
should *think* you there; for then they will absolutely
despair of finding you. If you write, be pleased to
direct, To be left for you, at Mr. Osgood's, near
Soho-square; who is a man of reputation, and they
will go very safe: And this will effectually amuse
them.

Amuse them, my dear!—Amuse whom?—My
father!—my uncles!—But it must be so!—All his
expedients ready, you see!—

I had no objection to this: And I have written
accordingly. But what answer I shall have, or whe-
ther any, that is what gives me no small anxiety.

This, however, is one consolation, that, if I have
an answer, and altho' my brother should be the wri-
ter, it cannot be more severe than the treatment I
have of late received from him and my sister.

Mr. Lovelace staid out about an hour and half;
and then came in; impatiently sending up to me no
less than four times, to express his desire of my com-
pany. But I sent him word as often, that I was busy;
and, at last, that I should be so, till dinner was ready.
So he hasten'd that, as I heard him now-and-then,
with a hearty curse upon the cook and waiters.

This is another of his perfections. I ventured
afterwards to check him for his free words, as we sat
at dinner.

Having heard him swear at his servant, when be-
low, whom, nevertheless, he owns to be a good one;
It is a sad life, said I, these innkeepers live, Mr.
Lovelace.

No; pretty well, I believe.—But why, madam,
think you, that fellows, who eat and drink at other
mens

mens cost, or they are sorry whelps of innkeepers, should be intitled to pity?

Because of the soldiers they are obliged to quarter; who are generally, I believe, wretched profligates. Bless me! said I, how I heard one of them swear and curse, just now, at a modest meek man, as I judge by his low voice and gentle answers!—Well do they make it a proverb—*Like a trooper!*

He bit his lip; arose; turned upon his heel; stepped to the glass; and looked *confidently* abashed, if I may so say—Ay, Madam, said he, these troopers are sad swearing fellows. I think their officers should chastise them for it.

I am sure they deserve chastisement, reply'd I—For swearing is a most *unmanly* vice, and cursing as *poor* and *low* a one; since it proclaims the profligate's want of power, and his wickedness at the same time: for, could such a one *punish* as he *speaks*, he would be a fiend!

Charmingly observed, by my soul, madam!—The next trooper I hear swear and curse, I'll tell him what an *unmanly*, and what a *poor* whelp he is.

Mrs. Greme came to pay her duty to me, as Mr. Lovelace called it; and was very urgent with me to go to her Lord's house; letting me know what handsome things she had heard her Lord, and his two nieces, and all the family, say of me; and what wishes, for several months past, they had put up for the honour she now hoped soon would be done them all.

This gave me some satisfaction, as it confirmed from the mouth of a very good sort of woman, all that Mr. Lovelace had told me.

Upon inquiry about a private lodging, she recommended me to a sister-in-law of hers, eight miles from thence—Where I now am. And what pleased me the better, was, that Mr. Lovelace [of whom I could see she was infinitely observant] obliged her, of his
own

own motion, to accompany me in the chaise ; himself riding on horseback, with his two servants, and one of Lord M.'s. And here we arrived about four o'clock.

But, as I told you in my former, the lodgings are inconvenient, and Mr. Lovelace found great fault with them ; telling Mrs. Greme, who had said, they were not worthy of us, that they came not up even to her description of them ; that, as the house was a mile from a town, it was not proper for him to be so far distant from me, lest any thing should happen : And yet the apartments were not separate and distinct enough for me to like, he was sure.

This must be agreeable enough from him, you'll believe.

Mrs. Greme and I had a good deal of talk in the chaise about him : She was very easy and free in her answers to all I asked ; and has a very serious turn, I find.

I led her on to say to the following effect ; some part of it not unlike what his uncle's dismissed bailiff had said before ; by which I find that all the servants opinion of him is alike.

‘ That Mr. Lovelace was a generous man : That it
 ‘ was hard to say, whether the servants of her Lord’s
 ‘ family lov’d or fear’d him most : That her Lord had
 ‘ a very great affection for him : That his two noble
 ‘ aunts were no less fond of him : That his two
 ‘ cousins Montague were as good-natured young Ladies as ever lived : That his uncle and aunts had
 ‘ proposed several Ladies to him, before he made his
 ‘ addreses to me ; and even since ; despairing to
 ‘ move me, and my friends, in his favour—But that
 ‘ he had no thoughts of marrying at all, she had heard
 ‘ him say, if it were not to me : That as well her Lord,
 ‘ as his sisters, were a good deal concerned at the
 ‘ contempts, and ill-usage, he received from my family : But admired my character, and wish’d to
 ‘ have

have him married to me, altho' I were not to have a shilling, in preference to any other person, from the opinion that they had of the influence I should have over him: That, to be sure, she said, Mr. Lovelace was a wild gentleman: But that was a distemper which would cure itself: That her Lord delighted in his company, whenever he could get it: But that they often fell out; and his lordship was always forced to submit: Indeed, was half-afraid of him, she believ'd—For he would do as he pleased. She mingled a thousand pities often, that he acted not up to the talents lent him—Yet would have it, that he had fine qualities to found a reformation upon; and, when the happy day came, would make amends for all: And of this all his friends were so assured, that they wished for nothing so earnestly, as for his marriage."

This, indifferent as it is, is better than my brother says of him.

The people of the house here are very honest-looking industrious folks: Mrs Sorlings is the gentleman's name. The farm seems well-stock'd, and thriving. She is a widow, has two sons, men grown, who vie with each other which shall take most pains in promoting the common good; and they are both of them, I already see, more respectful to two modest young women, their sisters, than my brother was to his sister. I believe I must stay here longer than at first I thought I should.

I should have mentioned, that, before I set out for this place, I received your kind letter. Every thing is kind from so dear a friend. I own you might well be surpris'd; [*I was myself*; as by this time you will have seen]—after I had determin'd, too, so strongly against going away.

I have not the better opinion of Mr. Lovelace for his extravagant volubility. He is too full of professions: He says too many fine things *of me*, and *to me*:

True respect, true value, I think, lies not in words: Words *cannot* express it; the silent awe, the humble, the doubting eye, and even the hesitating voice, better shew it by much, than, as Shakespeare says,

—*The rattling tongue*
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.

The man, to be sure, is, at all times, all upon the *ecstatic*, one of his phrases; but, to my shame and confusion, I know too well what to attribute it to, in a great measure—To his *triumph*, my dear, in one word; it needs no further explanation; and, to give it *that* word, perhaps, equally exposes my vanity, and condemns my folly.

We have been alarmed with notions of a pursuit, founded upon a letter from his intelligencer.

How do different circumstances sanctify or condemn an action!—What care ought we to take not to confound the distinctions of right and wrong, when *self* comes into the question! I condemn'd in him the corrupting of a servant of my papa's; and now I am glad to give a kind of indirect approbation of it, by inquiring what he hears, by that or any other way, of the manner in which my relations took my flight. A preconcerted, forward, and artful flight, to be sure, it must appear to them—That's a sad thing!—Yet how, as I am situated, can I put them right?

Most heavily, he says, they take it; but shew not so much grief as rage.—And he can hardly have patience to hear of the virulence and menaces of my brother against himself—Then a merit is made to me of his forbearance.

What a satisfaction am I robbed of, my dearest friend, by this rash action? I can now, too late, judge of the difference there is in being an *offended* rather than an *offending* person!—What would I give to have it once more in my power to say I *suffer'd* wrong, rather than *did* wrong? That others were more wanting

wanting in their kindness to me, than I in duty (where duty is owing) to them?—

Fie upon me! for meeting the seducer!—Let all end as happily as it now may, I have laid up for myself remorse for my whole life.

What more concerns me is, that every time I see this man, I am still at a greater loss than before what to make of him. I watch every turn of his countenance: And I think I see very deep lines in it. He looks with more meaning, I verily think, than he used to look; yet not more serious; not less gay—I don't know how he looks—But with more confidence a great deal than formerly; and yet he never wanted that.

But here is the thing: I behold him with fear now, as knowing the power my indiscretion has given him over me. And well may *he* look more elate, when he sees me deprived of all the self supposed significance, which adorns and exalts a person who has been accustomed to respect; and who now, by a conscious inferiority, allows herself to be overcome, and in a state of obligation, as I may say, to her new protector.

I shall send this, as my former, by a poor man, who travels every day with pedlary matters, who will leave it at Mrs. Knolly's, as you direct.

If you hear any thing of my father and mother, and of their health, and how my friends were affected by my unhappy step, pray be so good as to write me a few lines by the messenger, if his waiting for them can be known to you.

I am afraid to ask you, Whether, upon reading that part of my narrative already in your hands, you think any sort of extenuation lies for

Your unhappy

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER VI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday, Wedn. Apr. 11, 12.

THOU claimest my promise that I will be as particular as possible, in all that passes between me and my goddess. Indeed, I never had a more illustrious subject to exercise my pen upon: And, moreover, I have leisure; for, by her good-will, my access would be as difficult to her, as that of the humblest slave to an eastern monarch. Nothing, then, but inclination to write, can be wanting: And since our friendship, and thy obliging attendance upon me at the White Hart, will not excuse That, I will endeavour to keep my word.

I parted with thee and thy brethren, with a full resolution, thou knowest, to rejoin ye, if she once again disappointed me, in order to go together, attended by our servants, for shew-sake to her gloomy father; and demand audience of the tyrant, upon the freedoms taken with my character: And to have try'd by fair means, if fair would do, to make them change their resolutions; and treat *her* with less inhumanity, and *me* with more civility.

I told thee my reasons for not going in search of a letter of countermand. I was right; for, if I had, I should have found such a one; and had I received it, she would not have met me. Did she think, that after I had been more than once disappointed, I would not keep her to her promise; that I would not hold her to it, when I had got her in so deeply?

The moment I heard the door unbolt, I was sure of her. That motion made my heart bound to my throat. But when That was followed with the presence of my charmer, flashing upon me all at once in a flood of brightness, sweetly dress'd, tho' all un-
prepar'd

prepar'd for a journey, I trod air, and hardly thought myself a mortal.

Thou shalt judge of her dress, as, at the moment she appear'd to me, and as, upon a nearer observation, she really was. I am a critic, thou knowest, in womens dresses.—Many a one have I taught to dress, and help'd to undress. But there is such a native elegance in this lady, that she surpasses all that I could imagine surpassing—But then her person adorns what she wears more than dress can adorn her; and that's her excellence.

Expect therefore, a faint sketch of her admirable person with her dress.

Her wax-like flesh [for, after all, flesh and blood I think she is!] by its delicacy and firmness, answers for the soundness of her health. Thou hast often heard me launch out in praise of her complexion. I never in my life beheld a skin so *illustriously* fair. The lily and the driven snow it is nonsense to talk of: Her lawn and her laces one might, indeed, compare to those: But what a whited wall would a woman appear to be, who had a complexion which would justify such unnatural comparisons? But this lady is all-alive, all-glowing, all charming flesh and blood, yet so clear, that every meandering vein is to be seen in all the lovely parts of her, which custom permits to be visible.

Thou hast heard me also describe the wavy ringlets of her shining hair, needing neither art nor powder; of itself an ornament, defying all other ornaments; wantoning in and about a neck that is beautiful beyond description.

Her head-dress was a Brussels-lace mob, peculiarly adapted to the charming air and turn of her features. A sky-blue ribband illustrated that.—But altho' the weather was somewhat sharp, she had not on either hat or hood; for, besides that she loves to use herself hardily (by which means, and by a temperance

truly exemplary, she is allowed to have given high health and vigour to an originally tender constitution), she seems to have intended to shew me, that she was determin'd not to stand to her appointment. O Jack! that such a sweet girl should be a rogue!

Her morning-gown was a pale primrose-colour'd paduasoy: The cuffs and robings curiously embroider'd by the fingers of this ever-charming Arachne, in a running pattern of violets, and their leaves; the light in the flowers silver; gold in the leaves. A pair of diamond snaps in her ears. A white handkerchief, wrought by the same inimitable fingers, concealed—O Belford! what still more inimitable beauties did it not conceal.—And I saw, all the way we rode, the bounding heart; by its throbbing motions I saw it! dancing beneath the charming umbrage.

Her ruffles were the same as her mob. Her apron a flower'd lawn. Her coat white fatten, quilted: Blue fatten her shoes, braided with the same colour, without lace; for what need has the prettiest foot in the world of ornament? Neat buckles in them: And on her charming arms a pair of black velvet glove-like muffs, of her own invention; for she makes and gives fashions as she pleases. Her hands, velvet of themselves, thus uncover'd, the freer to be grasp'd by those of her adorer.

I have told thee what were *my* transports, when the undrawn bolt presented to me my long-expected goddesses.—*Her* emotions were more sweetly feminine, after the first moments; for then the fire of her starry eyes began to sink into a less-dazzling languor. She trembled: Nor knew she how to support the agitations of a heart she had never found so ungovernable. She was even fainting, when I clasp'd her in my supporting arms. What a precious moment That! How near, how sweetly near, the throbbing partners!

By her dress, I saw, as I observ'd before, how unprepar'd she was for a journey; and not doubting her
intention

intention once more to disappoint me, I would have drawn her after me. Then began a contention the most vehement that ever I had with woman. It would pain thy friendly heart to be told the infinite trouble I had with her. I begg'd, I pray'd ; on my knees I begg'd and pray'd, yet in vain, to answer her own appointment : And had I not happily provided for such a struggle, knowing whom I had to deal with, I had certainly failed in my design ; and as certainly would have accompanied her in, without thee and thy brethren : And who knows what might have been the consequence ?

But my honest agent answering my signal, tho' not quite so soon as I expected, in the manner thou knowest I had laid down to him, 'They are coming ! They are coming !—Fly, fly, my beloved creature, cry'd I, drawing my sword with a flourish, as if I would have slain half an hundred of them ; and, seizing her trembling hands, I drew her after me so swiftly, that *my* feet, winged by love, could hardly keep pace with *her* feet, agitated by fear.—And so I became her emperor !

I'll tell thee all, when I see thee : And thou shalt then judge of my difficulties, and of her perverseness. And thou wilt rejoice with me, at my conquest over such a watchful and open-ey'd charmer.

But seest thou not now [as I think I do] the wind-outstripping fair-one flying *from* her love to her love ?—Is there not such a game ?—Nay, flying from friends she was resolved not to abandon, to the man she was determined not to go off with ?—The Sex ! The Sex, all over !—Charming contradiction ! —Hah, hah, hah, hah !—I must here lay down my pen, to hold my sides ; for I must have my laugh out, now the fit is upon me !



I believe—I believe—Hah, hah, hah !—I believe, Jack, my dogs conclude me mad : For here has one
of

of them popt in, as if to see what ailed me; or whom I had with me.—The whorefom caught the laugh, as he went out.—Hah, hah, hah!—An *im*-pudent dog! ———O Jack, knewest thou my conceit, and were but thy laugh joined to mine, I believe it would hold me for an hour longer.

But, O my best-beloved fair-one, repine not thou at the arts by which thou suspectest thy fruitless vigilance has been over-watched.—Take care, that thou provokest not new ones, that may be still more worthy of thee. If once thy emperor decrees thy fall, thou shalt greatly fall. Thou shalt have cause, if that comes to pass which *may* come to pass [for why wouldest thou put off marriage to so long a day, as till thou hadst reason to be convinced of my reformation, dearest?] thou shalt have cause, never fear, to sit down more dissatisfied with thy stars, than with thyself. And come the worst to the worst, glorious terms will I give thee. Thy garrison, with *Prudence* at the head, and *Watchfulness* bringing up the rear, shall be allowed to march out with all the honours due to so brave a resistance. And all thy sex, and all mine, that hear of my stratagems, and thy conduct, shall acknowlege the fortress as nobly won, as defended.

Thou wilt not dare, methinks I hear thee say, to attempt to reduce such a goddess as This, to a standard unworthy of her excellencies. It is impossible, Lovelace, that thou shouldst intend to break thro' oaths and protestations so solemn.

That I did *not* intend it, is certain. That I *do* intend it, I cannot (my heart, my reverence for her, will not let me) say. But knowest thou not my aversion to the states of shackles?——And is she not IN MY POWER?

And wilt thou, Lovelace, abuse that power, which ——Which what, puppy?—Which I obtain'd not by her own consent, but against it.

But

But which thou hadst never obtained, had she not esteem'd thee above all men.

And which I had never taken so much pains to obtain, had I not loved her above all women—So far upon a par, Jack!—And if thou pleadest honour, ought not honour to be mutual? If mutual, does it not imply mutual trust, mutual confidence?—And what have I had of *that* from her to boast of?—Thou knowest the whole progress of our warfare: For a warfare it has truly been; and far, very far, from an amorous warfare too. Doubts, mistrusts, upbraidings, on her part: Humiliations the most abject, on mine. Obligated to assume such airs of reformation, that every varlet of ye has been afraid I should reclaim in good earnest. And hast thou not thyself frequently observed to me, how awkwardly I return to my usual gaiety, after I had been within a mile of her father's garden-wall, altho' I had not seen her?

Does she not deserve to pay for all this?—To make an honest fellow look like an hypocrite; what a vile thing is that!

Then thou knowest what a false little rogue she has been! How little conscience she has made of disappointing me!—Hast thou not been a witness of my ravings, on this score?—Have I not, in the height of them, vowed revenge upon the faithless charmer?—And, if I *must* be forsworn, whether I answer her expectations, or follow my own inclinations, and the option of my own power; can I hesitate a moment which to choose?

Then, I fancy, by her circumspection, and her continual grief, that she expects some mischief from me. I don't care to disappoint any-body I have a value for.

But O the noble, the exalted creature! Who can avoid hesitating when he thinks of an offence against her?—Who can but pity—

Yet,

Yet, on the other hand, so loth at last to venture, tho' threatened to be forced into the nuptial fetters with a man, whom to look upon as a rival, is to disgrace myself!—So fullen, now she has ventured! What title has *she* to pity; and to a pity which her pride would make her disclaim?

But I resolve not *any way*. I will see how *her* will works; and how *my* will leads me on. I will give the combatants fair play. And I find, every time I attend her, that she is less in *my* power—I more in *hers*.

Yet, a foolish little rogue! to forbid me to think of marriage till I am a reformed man! Till the Implacables of her family change their natures, and become placable!

It is true, when she was for making those conditions, she did not think, that, without any, she should be cheated out of herself; for so the dear soul, as thou mayst hear in its place, phrases it.

How it swells my pride, to have been able to outwit such a vigilant charmer!—I am taller by half a yard, in my imagination, than I was!—I look *down* upon every-body now!—Last night I was still more extravagant.——I took off my hat, as I walk'd, to see if the lace were not scorch'd, supposing it had brush'd down a star; and, before I put it on again, in mere wantonness, and heart's ease, I was for buffeting the moon. In short, my whole soul is joy. When I go to bed, I laugh myself asleep: And I awake either laughing or singing.—Yet nothing *nearly* in view, neither.——For why?—*I am not yet reform'd enough!*

I told thee at the time, if thou remembrest, how capable this restriction was, of being turn'd upon the over-scrupulous dear creature, could I once get her out of her father's house; and were I disposed to punish her for her family's faults, and for the infinite trouble she herself had given me. Little thinks she, that I have kept an account of both: And that, when
my

my heart is soft, and all her own, I can but turn to my *memoranda*, and harden myself at once.

O my charmer, look to it!—Abate of thy haughty airs!—Value not thyself upon thy sincerity, if thou art indifferent to me!—I will not bear it *Now*.—*Art thou not in my POWER?*—Nor, if thou lovest me, think, that the female affectation of denying thy love, will avail thee *Now*, with a heart so proud and so jealous?—Remember, moreover, that all thy family-sins are upon thy head!—

But, ah! Jack, when I see my Angel, when I am admitted to the presence of this radiant Beauty, what will become of all this vapouring?—

But, be my end what it may, I am obliged, by thy penetration, fair-one, to proceed by the sap.—*Fair and softly*.—A wife at any time!—that will be always in my power.

When put to the university, the same course of *initial studies* will qualify the youngster for the one line or for the other. The genius ought to point out the future lawyer, divine, or physician!—So the same cautious conduct, with such a vigilance, will do, either for the *wife*, or for the *no-wife*. When I reform, I'll marry. 'Tis time enough for the *one*, the *Lady* must say—For the *other*, say I!

But how I ramble!—This it is to be in such a situation, that I know not what to resolve upon.

I'll tell thee my *inclinations*, as I proceed. The *pro's* and the *con's*, I'll tell thee.—But being got too far from the track I set out in, I will close here. But, perhaps, may write every day something, and send it as opportunity offers.

Regardless, however, in all I write, as I shall be, of connexion, accuracy, or of any thing, but of my own imperial will and pleasure.

The HISTORY of
L E T T E R VII.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Wednesday Night, April 12.

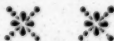
I HAVE your narrative, my dear. You are the same noble creature you ever were. Above disguise, above art, above extenuating a failing.

The only family in the world, yours, surely, that could have driven such a daughter into such extremities.

But you must not be so very much too good for *them*, and for the *case*.

You lay the blame so properly and so unsparingly upon your meeting him that nothing can be added to that subject by your worst enemies, were they to see what you have written.

I am not surpris'd, now I have read your narrative, that so bold, and so contriving a man——I am forced to break off——



YOU stood it out much better and longer——
Here again comes my bustling, jealous mother!



DON'T be so angry at yourself. Did you not do for the best at the time? As to your first fault, the answering his letters; it was almost incumbent upon you to assume the guardianship of such a family, when the bravo of it had run riot, as he did, and brought himself into danger.

Except your mamma, who is kept down, have any of them common sense?——

Forgive me, my dear——Here is that stupid uncle Antony of yours. A pragmatistical, conceited, positive——He came yesterday, in a fearful pucker, and puffed, and blowed, and stumped about our hall and parlour, while his message was carried up.

My

My mamma was dressing herself. These widows are as starched as the batchelors. She would not see him in a dishabille, for the world — What can she mean by it?

His errand was to set her against you, and to shew their determined rage on your going away. The issue proved it to be so too evidently.

The odd creature desired to speak with her alone. I am not used to such exceptions, whenever any visits are made to my mamma.

When my mamma was primm'd out, down she came to him — The door was locked upon themselves; the two positive heads were put together — close together, I suppose — for I hearken'd, but could hear nothing distinctly, tho' they both seem'd full of their subject.

I had a good mind, once or twice, to have made them open the door — Could I have been sure of keeping but tolerably my temper, I would have demanded admittance — But I was afraid if I had obtained it, that I should have forgot it was mamma's house, and been for turning him out of it. — To come to rave against and abuse my dearest, dearest, faultless friend! and the ravings to be listen'd to — And this in order to justify themselves; the one for contributing to drive her out of her father's house; the other for refusing her a temporary asylum, till the reconciliation could have been affected, which her dutiful heart was set upon! — And which it would have become the love my mamma had ever pretended for you, to have meditated for — Could I have had patience!

The *issue*, as I said, shew'd what the errand was — Its first appearance, after the old fusty fellow was marched off [You must excuse me, my dear], was in a kind of gloomy, Harlowe-like reservedness in my mamma; which, upon a few resenting flirts of mine, was followed by a rigorous prohibition of correspondence.

This puts tis, you may suppose, upon terms not the most agreeable. I desired to know, If I were prohibited *dreaming* of you?—For, my dear, you have all my sleeping, as well as waking hours.

I can easily allow for your correspondence with your wretch, at first [and yet your motives were excellent], by the effect this prohibition has upon me; since, if possible, it has made me love you better than before; and I am more desirous than ever of corresponding with you.

But I have still a more laudable motive—I should think myself the unworthiest of creatures, could I be brought to slight a dear friend, and such a meritorious one, in her distress.—I would die first—And so I told my mamma. And I have desired her not to watch me in my retired hours, nor to insist upon my lying with her constantly, which she now does more earnestly than ever.—’Twere better, I told her, that the Harlowe-Betty, were borrowed to be set over me.

Mr. Hickman, who greatly honours you, has, unknown to me, interposed so warmly in your favour with my mamma, that it makes for him no small merit with me.

I cannot, at present, write to every particular, unless I would be in *set* defiance—Teaze, teaze, teaze, for ever! The same thing, tho’ answered fifty times over, is every hour to be repeated—Lord blefs me! what a life must my poor papa—But I must remember to whom I am writing.

If this ever-active, ever-mischievous monkey of a man—This Lovelace—contrived as you suspect—But here comes my mamma again—Ay, stay a little longer, my mamma, if you please—I can but be suspected! I can but be chidden for making you wait; and chidden I am sure to be, whether I do or not, in the way you are *Antony’d* into.

Blefs

Bless me!—how impatient!—I must break off—



A CHARMING dialogue—But I am sent for, down in a very peremptory manner, I assure you.--What an incoherent letter will you have, when I can get it to you! But now I know where to send it, Mr. Hickman shall find me a messenger. Yet, if he be detected, poor soul, he will be *Harlowed-off*, as well as his meek mistress!—

Thursday, April 13.

I HAVE this moment your continuation-letter, and a little absence of my Argus-eyed mamma.—

Dear creature!—I can account for all your difficulties. A person of your delicacy!—And with such a man!—I must be brief.—

The man's a fool, my dear, with all his pride, and with all his complaisance, and affected regard to your injunctions. Yet his ready inventions—

Sometimes I think you should go to Lady Betty's.—I know not what to advise you to.—I could, if you were not so intent upon reconciling yourself to your relations. But they are implacable, you can have no hopes from them—Your uncle's errand to my mamma may convince you of that; and if you have an answer to your letter to your sister, that will confirm you I dare say.

You need not to have been afraid of asking me, Whether I thought upon reading your narrative, any extenuation could lie for what you have done. I have told you above my mind as to that—And I repeat, that I think, your *provocations* and *inducements* considered, you are free from blame: At least, the freest, that ever young creature was who took such a step.

But you took it not—You were driven on one side, and, possibly, trick'd on the other.—If any young person on earth shall be circumstanced as you were, and shall hold out so long as you did, against

her persecutors on one hand, and her seducer on the other, I will forgive her for all the rest.

All your acquaintance, you may suppose, talk of nobody but you. Some, indeed, bring your admirable character against you : But nobody does, or *can* acquit your father and uncles.

Every-body seems apprized of your brother's and sister's motives. It is, no doubt, the very thing they aimed to drive you to, by the various attacks they made upon you ; unhoping (as they might do all the time) the success. They knew, that if once you were restored to favour, Love suspended would be Love augmented, and that you must defeat and expose them, and triumph by your amiable qualities, and great talents, over all their arts.—And now, I hear, they enjoy their successful malice.

Your father is all rage and violence. He ought, I am sure, to turn his rage inward. All your family accuse you of acting with deep art ; and are put upon supposing, that you are actually every hour exulting over them, with your man, in the success of it.

They all pretend now, that your trial of Wednesday was to be the last.

Advantage would indeed, my mamma owns, have been taken of your yielding, if you had yielded. But had you not been to be prevailed upon, they would have given up their scheme, and taken your promise for renouncing Lovelace—Believe them who will ! They own, however, that a minister was to be present. Mr. Solmes was to be at hand. And your father was previously to try his authority over you, in order to make you sign the settlements.—All of it a romantic contrivance of your wild headed foolish brother, I make no doubt.—It is likely, that he and Bell, would have given way to your restoration to favour, on any other terms than those their hearts had been so long set upon ?

How

How they took your flight when they found it out may be better supposed than described.

Your aunt Hervey, it seems, was the first that went down to the Ivy summer-house, in order to acquaint you, that their search was over. Betty followed her; and they not finding you there, went on toward the cascade, according to a hint of yours.

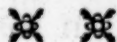
Returning by the garden-door, they met a servant [They don't say, it was that Joseph Leman; but it is very likely, that it *was* he] running, as he said, from pursuing Mr. Lovelace (a great hedge-flake in his hand, and out of breath), to alarm the family.

If it were this fellow, and if he were employed in the double agency of cheating them, and cheating you, what shall we think of the wretch you are with?—Run away from him, my dear, if so—No matter to whom—or marry him, if you cannot.

Your aunt and all your family were accordingly alarmed by this fellow [evidently when too late for pursuit]. They got together, and, when a posse, ran to the place of interview; and some of them as far as to the tracks of the chariot wheels, without stopping. And having heard the man's tale, upon the spot, a general lamentation, a mutual upbraiding and rage, and grief, were echoed from the different persons, according to their different tempers and conceptions. And they returned like fools as they went.

Your brother, at first, ordered horses and armed men, to be got ready for a pursuit. Solmes and your uncle Tony were to be of the party. But your mamma and your aunt Hervey dissuaded them from it, for fear of adding evil to evil; not doubting but Lovelace had taken measures to support himself in what he had done; and especially when the servant declared, that he saw you run with him, as fast as you could set foot to ground; and that there were several armed

men on horseback at a small distance off.



My mamma's absence was owing to her suspicion, that the Knolly's were to assist in our correspondence. She made them a visit upon it. She does every thing at once. And they have promised, that no more letters shall be left there, without her knowledge.

But Mr. Hickman has engaged one Filmer, a husbandman, in the lane we call Finch-lane, near us, to receive them. Thither you will be pleased to direct yours, under cover, to Mr. John Soberton; and Mr. Hickman himself will call for them there; and there shall leave mine. It goes against me too, to make him so useful to me.—He looks already so proud upon it!—I shall have him (who knows?) give himself airs.—He had best consider, that the favour he has been long aiming at, may put him into a very dangerous, a very ticklish situation. He that can oblige, may disoblige—Happy for some people not to have it in their power to offend!

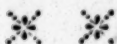
I will have patience, if I can, for a while, to see if these bustlings in my mamma will subside.—But upon my word, I will not long bear this usage.

Sometimes I am ready to think, that my mamma carries it thus on purpose to tire me out, and to make me the sooner marry. If I find it to be so, and that Hickman, in order to make a merit with me, is in the low plot, I will never bear him in my sight.

Plotting wretch, as I doubt your man is, I wish to heaven, that you were married, that you might brave them all; and not be forced to hide yourself, and be hurried from one inconvenient place to another. I charge you, omit not to lay hold on any handsome opportunity that may offer for that purpose.

Here

Here again comes my mamma.



WE look mighty glum upon each other, I can tell you. She had not best *Harlowe* me at this rate!—I won't bear it!—

I have a vast deal to write. I know not what to write first. Yet my mind is full, and seems to run over.

I am got into a private corner of the garden, to be out of her way.——Lord help these mothers!——Do they think they can prevent a daughter's writing, or doing any thing she has a mind to do, by suspicion, watchfulness, and scolding?—They had better place a confidence in one by half——A generous mind scorns to abuse a generous confidence.

You have a nice, a very nice part to act with this wretch——Who yet has, I think, but one plain path before him. I pity you!——But you must make the best of the lot you have been forced to draw. Yet I see your difficulties.——But if he do not offer to abuse your confidence, I would have you *seem*, at least, to place some in him.

If you think not of marrying soon, I approve of your resolution to fix somewhere out of his reach: And if he know not where to find you, so much the better. Yet I verily believe, they would force you back, could they but come at you, if they were not afraid of *him*.

I think, by all means, you should demand of both your trustees to be put in possession of your own estate. Mean time I have sixty guineas at your service. I beg you will command them. Before they are gone, I'll take care you shall be further supplied. I don't think you'll have a shilling, or a shilling's worth, of your own, from your relations, unless you extort it from them.

As they believe you went off by your own consent, they are surpriz'd, it seems, and glad, that you have
left

left your jewels and money behind you, and have not contrived for cloaths so ill. Very little likelihood, this shews, of their answering your requests.

Indeed every-body, not knowing what I *now* know, must be at a loss to account for your flight, as they will call it. And how, my dear, can one report it with any tolerable advantage to you?—— To say you did not intend it, when you met him, who will believe it?—— To say, that a person of your known steadiness and punctilio was over-persuaded, when you gave him the meeting, how will that sound?—— To say, you were tricked out of yourself, and people were to give credit to it, how disreputable?—— And while unmarried, and yet with him, he a man of such a character, what would it not lead a censuring world to think?

I want to see how you put it in your letter for your cloaths.

You may depend, I repeat, upon all the little spiteful and disgraceful things they can offer, instead of what you write for. So pray accept the sum I tender. What will seven guineas do?—— And I will find a way to send you also any of my cloaths and linen for present supply. I beg, my dearest Miss Harlowe, that you will not put your Anna Howe upon a foot with Lovelace, in refusing to accept of my offer. If you do not oblige me, I shall be apt to think, that you rather incline to be obliged to him, than to favour me. And if I find this, I shall not know how to reconcile it with your delicacy in other respects.

Pray inform me of every thing that passes between you and him. My cares for you (however needless, from your own prudence) make me wish you to continue to be very minute. If any thing occur that you would tell me of, if present, fail not to put it down in writing, altho', from your natural diffidence, it should not appear to you altogether so worthy of your pen, or of my knowing. A stander-by may see
more

more of the game than one that plays. Great consequences, like great folks, are generally attended, and even *made* great, by small causes, and little incidents.

Upon the whole, I do not now think it is in your power to dismiss him when you please. I apprized you beforehand that it would not. I repeat, therefore, that were I you, I would at least *seem* to place some confidence in him : So long as he is decent, you may. Very visibly observable, to such delicacy as yours, must be that behaviour in him, which will make him unworthy of *some* confidence.

Your relations, according to old Antony to *my mother*, and *she* to *me* (by way of threatening, that you will not gain your supposed ends upon them by your flight), seem to expect, that you will throw yourself into Lady Betty's protection ; and that she will offer to mediate for you : And they vow, that they will never hearken to any accommodation, or terms, that shall come from that quarter. They might speak out, and say, from *any* quarter ; for I dare aver, that your brother and sister will not let them cook— At least, till their uncles have made such dispositions, and your father too, perhaps, as they would have them make.

As this letter will apprise you of an alteration in the place to which you must direct your next, I send it by a friend of Mr. Hickman's, who may be depended upon. He has business in the neighbourhood of Mrs. Sorlings, whom he knows ; and will return to Mr. Hickman this night ; and bring back any letter you shall have ready to send, or can get ready. It is moon-light. He won't mind waiting for you. I choose not to send by any of Mr. Hickman's, servants ; — at present, however. Every hour is now, or may be, important ; and may make an alteration in your resolutions and situation necessary.

I hear, from where I sit, my mamma calling about her, and putting every-body into motion. She will soon,

soon, I suppose, make *me*, and *my* employment, the subject of her inquiry.

Adieu, my dear. May heaven preserve you, and restore you with honour as unsullied as your mind, to

Your ever-affectionate,

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER VIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Thursday, P. M. April 13.

I AM infinitely concerned, my ever-dear and ever-kind friend, that I am the sad occasion of the displeasure between your mamma and you.—How many unhappy persons have I made !

Had I not to console myself, that my error is not owing to wicked precipitation, I should be the most miserable of all creatures. As it is, I am enough punished in the loss of my character, more valuable to me than my life ; and in the cruel doubts and perplexities, which, conflicting with my hopes, and each getting the victory by turns, harrow up my soul between them.

I think, however, that you should obey your mamma ; and decline a correspondence with so unhappy a creature.—Take care how you fall into my error ; for That began with carrying on a prohibited correspondence ; which I thought it in my power to discontinue at pleasure. My talent is scribbling, and I the readier fell into this freedom, as I found delight in writing ; having motives too, which I thought laudable ; and, at one time, the permission of all my friends, to write to him (*a.*)

Yet (altho' I am ready sometimes to discontinue a correspondence so dear to me, in order to make your mamma easy) what hurt could a letter now-and-then
from

(*a*) *Vol. i. p. 16, 17.*

from each do? — Mine occasionally filled with self-accusation too! — So much prudence and discretion as you have; and lying under no temptation of following so bad an example, in writing to me.

I thank you most heartily for your kind offers. You may be assured, that I would sooner be beholden to you, than to any body living. To Mr. Lovelace the last. So, do not think, that by declining it, I have an intention to lay myself under obligations to him.

I am willing to hope, notwithstanding what you write, that I shall have my little money, together with my cloaths, sent me by my friends. They are too considerate, some of them, at least, to permit, that I should be put to such *low* difficulties. Perhaps, they will not be in haste to oblige me. But if not, I cannot yet want. — I believe you think, I must not dispute with him the expences of the road and lodgings, till I can get to a fixed one. But I hope soon to put an end even to those sort of obligations.

Small hopes, indeed, of a reconciliation, from your account of my uncle's visit to your mamma; to set her against an almost friendless creature, whom once he loved! But is it not my duty to try for it? Ought I to widen my error, by obstinacy and resentment, because of *their* resentment; which must appear reasonable to them, as they suppose my flight premeditated; and as they are made to believe, that I am capable of triumphing in it, and over them, with the man they hate? When I have done all in my power to restore myself to their favour, I shall have the less to reproach myself with — These considerations make me waver about following your advice, in relation to marriage; especially, as he is so dull of his complaisance, with regard to my former conditions, which he calls my *injunctions*. And, at the same time, that they dispose me not to go to any of the Ladies of his family, whose mediation my friends, as you tell me, have so strenuously declared against; I am ready to fix

fix all my reliance on my cousin Morden. For I think, that if I can be secure in a tolerable state of independence, till he comes to England, all must then be determined, in a better manner, than by any other way.

Yet, if I cannot get this man to leave me, how shall terms to my friends be proposed?—If he do, and they should get me back again by force, which you think they would attempt but for fear of him; how will the severest acts of compulsion which they can have recourse to, be justified by my flight from them?—And while we are together, and unmarried, as you observe, what censures do I expose myself to!—And must I then, to save the poor remains of my reputation, in the world's eye, watch the gracious motion from this man's lips?

I will acquaint you, as you desire, with all that passes between us. Hitherto I have not discovered any thing in his behaviour that is very exceptionable. Yet I cannot say, that I think the respect he shews me, an easy, unrestrained, and natural respect; altho' I can hardly tell where the fault is.

But he has doubtless an arrogant and incroaching spirit. Nor is he so polite as his education, and other advantages, might have made one expect him to be. He seems, in short, to be one, who has always had too much of his own will, to study to accommodate himself to that of others.

As to the placing of some confidence in him, I shall be as ready to take your advice in this particular, as in all others, and as he will be to deserve it. But tricked away as I was by him, not only against my judgment, but my inclination, can he, or any-body, expect, that I should immediately treat him with complaisance, as if I acknowledged obligation to him for carrying me away?—If I did, must he not either think me a vile dissembler *before* he gained that point, or *afterwards*?—

Indeed,

Indeed, indeed, my dear, I could tear my hair, on reconsidering what you write (as to the probability that the dreaded Wednesday was more dreaded than it needed to be), to think, that I should be thus trick'd by this man; and that, in all likelihood, thro' his vile agent Joseph Leman. So premeditated and elaborate a wickedness as it must be!—Must I not, with such a man, be wanting to myself, if I were not jealous and vigilant?—Yet what a life to live for a spirit so open, and naturally so unsuspicious, as mine?

I am obliged to Mr. Hickman for the assistance he is so kindly ready to give to our correspondence. He is so little likely to make to himself an additional merit with the *daughter* upon it, that I shall be very sorry, if he risk any thing with the *mother* by it.

I am now in a state of obligation: So must rest satisfy'd with whatever I cannot help—Whom have I the power, once so precious to me, of obliging?—What I mean, my dear, is, that I ought, perhaps, to expect, that my influences over you are weakened by my indiscretion. Nevertheless, I will not, if I can help it, desert myself, nor give up the privilege you used to allow me, of telling you what I think of any part of your conduct which I may disapprove of.

You must permit me therefore [severe as your mamma is against an undesigning offender] to say, that I think your liveliness to her inexcusable—To pass over, for this time, what nevertheless concerns me not a little, the free treatment you almost indiscriminately give my relations.

If you will not, for your *own sake*, forbear such tauntings and impatience as you repeat to me, let me beseech you, that you will for *mine*:—Since otherwise, your mamma may apprehend, that my example, like a leaven, is working itself into the mind of her beloved daughter. And may not such an apprehension give her an irreconcilable displeasure against me?

I inclose the copy of my letter to my sister, which you are desirous to see. You'll observe, that altho' I have not demanded my estate in form, and of my trustees, yet that I have hinted at leave to retire to it. How joyfully would I keep my word, if they would accept of the offer I renew!—It was not proper, I believe you'll think, on many accounts, to own that I was carry'd off against my inclination.

I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever-obliged and affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER IX.

To Miss ARABELLA HARLOWE.

Inclosed to Miss HOWE in the preceding.

My dear sister,

St. Albans, Tuesday, Apr. 11.

I HAVE, I confess, been guilty of an action which carries with it a rash and undutiful appearance. And I should have thought it an inexcusable one, had I been used with less severity than I have been of late; and had I not had too great reason to apprehend, that I was to be made a sacrifice to a man I could not bear to think of. But what is done, is done—Perhaps I could wish it had not—and that I had trusted to the relenting of my dear and honoured parents.—Yet This from no other motives, but those of duty to them.—To whom I am ready to return [if I may not be permitted to retire to *The Grove*], on conditions, which I before offered to comply with.

Nor shall I be in any sort of dependence upon the person by whose means I have taken this truly reluctant step, inconsistent with any reasonable engagement I shall enter into, if I am not farther precipitated.

Let me not have it to say, [now, at this important crisis!] that I have a sister, but not a friend in her.

My

My reputation, dearer to me than life (whatever you may imagine from the step I have taken), is suffering. A little lenity, will, even yet, in a great measure, restore it; and make that pass for a temporary misunderstanding only, which otherwise will be a stain as durable as life, upon a creature, who has already been treated with great unkindness, to use no harsher a word.

For your own sake therefore, for my brother's sake, who have thus precipitated me [I must say it!], and for all the family's sake, aggravate not my fault, if, on recollecting every thing, you think it one; nor by widening the unhappy difference, expose a sister for ever——Prays,

Your ever-affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

I shall take it for a very great favour, to have my cloaths directly sent me, together with fifty guineas, which you'll find in my escritoire [of which I inclose the key]; as also the divinity and miscellany classes of my little library; and, if it be thought fit, my jewels—Directed for me, To be left at Mr. Osgood's, near Soho-Square—Till call'd for.

L E T T E R X.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

MR. Lovelace, in continuation of his last letter, N^o. vi. gives an account to his Friend, pretty much to the same effect with the Lady's, of what passed between them at the inns, in the journey, and till their fixing at Mrs. Sorlings's. To avoid repetition, those passages in his account are only extracted, which will serve to embellish hers; to

open his views ; or to display the humourous talent he was noted for.

At their alighting at the inn at St. Alban's on Monday night, thus he writes.

The people who came about us, as we alighted, seemed, by their jaw-fallen faces, and goggling eyes, to wonder at beholding a charming young lady, majesty in her air and aspect, so composedly dressed, yet with features so discomposed, come off a journey, which had made the cattle smoke, and the servants sweat. I read their curiosity and my beloved's uneasiness. She cast a conscious glance as she alighted, upon her habit, which was *no habit*, and repulsively, as I may say, quitting my assisting hand, hurried into the house as fast as she could. * * *

Ovid was not a greater master of metamorphoses than thy friend. To the mistress of the house I instantly changed her into a sister, brought off by surprise from a near relation's (where she had winter'd), to prevent her marrying a confounded Rake [I love always to go as near the truth as I can], whom her father and mother, her eldest sister, and all her loving uncles, aunts, and cousins, abhorred. This accounted for my charmer's expected fullens ; for her displeasure when she was to join me again, were it to hold ; for her unsuitable dress upon a road ; and, at the same time, gave her a proper and seasonable assurance of my honourable views.

Upon the debate between the lady and him, and particularly upon that part where she upbraids him with putting a young creature upon making a sacrifice of her duty and conscience, he writes —

All these, and still more mortifying things, she said. I heard her in silence. But when it came to my turn, I pleaded, I argued, I answered her, as well as I could.——And when humility would not do,

do, I raised my voice, and suffer'd my eye to sparkle with anger; hoping to take advantage of that sweet cowardice which is so amiable in the Sex [which many of them, indeed, fantastically affect], and to which my victory over this proud beauty is principally owing.

She was not intimidated, however; and was going to rise upon me in her temper; and would have broke in upon my defence. But when a man talks to a lady upon such subjects, let her be ever so much in *Alt*, 'tis strange, if he cannot throw out a tub to the whale;—if he cannot divert her from resenting one bold thing, by uttering two or three full as bold; but for which more favourable interpretations will lie.

To that part, where she tells him of the difficulty she made to correspond with him at first, thus he writes.

Very true, my precious!—And innumerable have been the difficulties thou hast made me struggle with. But one day thou mayest wish, that thou hadst spared this boast; as well as those other pretty haughtinesses,—That thou didst not reject Solmes for *my* sake: That *my* glory, if I valued myself upon carrying thee off, was *thy* shame:—That I have more merit with *myself*, than with thee, or any-body else: [What a coxcomb she makes me, Jack!] That thou wishest thyself in thy father's house again, *whatever were to be the consequence*.—If I forgive thee, charmer, for these hints, for these reflections, for these wishes, for these contempts, I am not the Lovelace I have been reputed to be; and that thy treatment of me shews that thou thinkest I am——

In short, her whole air throughout this debate, expressed a majestic kind of indignation, which implied a believed superiority of talents over the man she spoke to.

Thou hast heard me often expatiate upon the pitiful figure a man must make, whose wife *has*, or *believes*

believes she has more sense than himself. A thousand reasons could I give, why I ought not to think of marrying Miss Clarissa Harlowe : At least till I can be sure, that she loves me with the preference I must expect from a wife.

I begin to stagger in my resolutions. Ever averse as I was to the Hymeneal shackles, how easily will old prejudices recur !—Heaven give me the heart to be honest to her !—There's a prayer, Jack !—If I should not be heard, what a sad thing would that be, for the most admirable of women !—Yet, as I do not often trouble Heaven with my prayers, who knows but this may be granted ?

But there lie before me such charming difficulties, such scenery for intrigue, for stratagem, for enterprize—What a horrible thing that my talents point all that way ! When I know what is honourable and just ; and would almost wish to be honest ?—*Almost*, I say ; for such a varlet am I, that I cannot altogether wish it, for the soul of me !—Such a triumph over the whole Sex, if I can subdue this lady ! My maiden vow, as I may call it !—For did not the Sex begin with me ?—And does this lady spare me ?—Think'st thou, Jack, that I should have spared my Rosebud, had I been set at defiance thus ?—Her grandmother besought me, at first, to spare her Rosebud ; and when a girl is put, or puts herself, into a man's power, what can he wish for further ? while I always consider'd opposition and resistance as a challenge to do my worst (*a.*)

Why, why, will the dear creature take such pains to appear all ice to me ?—Why will she, by *her* pride, awaken *mine* ?—Hast thou not seen, in the above, how contemptibly she treats me ?—What have I not suffer'd *for* her, and even *from* her ?—Is it tolerable to be told, that she will despise me, if I value myself above that odious Solmes !—

Then

(*a.*) See Vol. i. p. 229, 230.

Then she cuts me short in all my ardors. To vow fidelity, is, by a cursed turn upon me, to shew, that there is reason, in my own opinion, for doubt of it.— The very same reflection upon me, once before (a). In my power, or out of my power, all one to her.— So, Belford, my poor vows are cramm'd down my throat, before they can well rise to my lips. And what can a lover say to his mistress, if she will neither let him lie nor swear ?

One little piece of artifice I had recourse to: When she push'd so hard for me to leave her, I made a request to her, upon a condition she could not refuse ; and pretended as much gratitude upon her granting it, as if it were a favour of the last consequence.

And what was This ? but to promise what she had before promised, Never to marry any other man, while I am living, and single, unless I should give her cause for high disgust against me. This, you know, was promising nothing, because she could be offended at any time ; and was to be the sole judge of the offence. But it shew'd her, how reasonable and just my expectations were ; and that I was no encroacher.

She consented ; and ask'd, What security I expected ?

Her word only.

She gave me her word : But I besought her excuse for sealing it : And, in the same moment [since to have waited for consent, would have been asking for a denial], saluted her. And, believe me, or not, but, as I hope to live, it was the first time I had the courage to touch her charming lips with mine. And This I tell thee, Belford, that That single pressure (as modestly put too, as if I were as much a virgin as herself, that she might not be afraid of me another time) delighted me more than ever I was delighted by the *Ultimatum* with any other woman.—So precious
does

(a.) See Vol. ii. p. 66.

does awe, reverence, and apprehended prohibition, make a favour!

I am only afraid, that I shall be *too* cunning; for she does not at present *talk* enough for me. I hardly know what to make of the dear creature yet.

I topt the brother's part on Monday night before the landlady at St. Albans; asking my sister's pardon for carrying her off so unprepar'd for a journey; prated of the joy my father and mother, and all our friends, would have on receiving her; and This with so many circumstances, that I perceived, by a look she gave me, that went thro' my very reins, that I had gone too far. I apologiz'd for it, indeed, when alone; but I could not penetrate for the soul of me, whether I made the matter better or worse by it.—But I am of too frank a nature: My success, and the joy I have, because of the jewel I am half in possession of, has not only unlock'd my bosom, but left the door quite open.

This is a confounded sly Sex. Would she but speak out, as I do—But I must learn reserves of her.

She must needs be unprovided of money: But has too much pride to accept of any from me. I would have her go to town [to town, if possible, must I get her consent to go], in order to provide herself with the richest of silks which That can afford. But neither is this to be assented to. And yet, as my intelligencer acquaints me, her implacable relations are resolved to distress her all they can.

These wretches have been most gloriously raving, it seems, ever since her flight; and still, thank Heaven, continue to rave; and will, I hope, for a twelve-month to come.—Now, at last, it is my day!--

Bitterly do they regret, that they permitted her poultry visits, and garden-walks, which gave her the opportunity they know she had (tho' they could not find out how) to concert, as they suppose, her preconcerted escape. For, as to her dining in the Ivy-bower,

bower, they had a cunning design to answer upon her in that permission, as Betty told Joseph her lover (a).

They lost, they say, an excellent pretence for *more* closely confining her, on my threatening to rescue her, if they offer'd to carry her against her will to old Antony's moated house (b). For this, as I told thee at the Hart, and as I once hinted to the dear creature herself (c), they had it in deliberation to do; apprehending that I might attempt to carry her off, either with or without her consent, on some one of those connived-at excursions.

But here my honest Joseph, who gave me the information, was of admirable service to me. I had taught him to make the Harlowes believe, that I was as communicative to my servants, as their stupid James was to Joseph (d): Joseph, as they supposed, by tampering with Will (e), got at all my secrets, and was acquainted with all my motions: And having undertaken to watch all his young Lady's too (f); the wise family were secure; and so was my beloved, and so was I.

I once had it in my head [and I hinted it to thee in a former (g),] in case such a step should be necessary, to attempt to carry her off by surprize from the wood-house; as it is remote from the dwelling-house. This, had I attempted, I should certainly have effected, by the help of the Confraternity: And it would have been an action worthy of us All.—But Joseph's conscience, as he called it, stood in my way; for he thought, it must have been known to be done by his

(a) See Vol. ii. p. 304. (b) See Vol. ii. p. 222—228—244, 245.

(c) Vol. ii. p. 224—See also p. 292.

(d) Vol. ii. p. 300—304, 305.

(e) This will be farther explain'd in Letter xx. of this volume.

(f) See Vol. i. p. 198—233, 234,

235.

(g) See Vol. i. p. 235.

his connivance. I could, I dare say, have overcome this scruple, as easily as I did many of his others, had I not depended, at one time, upon her meeting me at a midnight or late hour; when, if she had, it would have cost me a fall, had she gone back; at other times, upon the cunning family's doing my work for me, by driving her into my arms.

And then I knew, that James and Arabella were determin'd never to leave off their foolish trials and provocations, till, by tiring her out, they had either made her Solmes's wife; or guilty of such a rashness as should throw her for ever out of the favour of both her uncles.

LETTER XI.

Mr. LOVELACE; In Continuation.

I Obliged the dear creature highly, I could perceive, by bringing Mrs. Greme to attend her, and to suffer that good woman's recommendation of lodgings to take place, on her refusal to go to the Lawn.

She must observe, that all my views were honourable, when I had provided for her no particular lodgings, leaving it to her choice, whether she'd go to M. Hall, to the Lawn, to London, or to either of my aunts.

She was visibly pleased with my motion of putting Mrs. Greme into the chaise with her, and riding on horseback myself.

Some people would have been apprehensive of what might pass between her and Mrs. Greme. But as all my relations know the justice of my intentions by her, I was in no pain on that account. Especially as I had been always above hypocrisy, or wanting to be thought better than I am. And indeed, what occasion has a man to be an hypocrite, who has hitherto found his views upon the Sex better answer'd, for his being
known

known to be a rake?—Why, even my beloved here, deny'd not to correspond with me, tho' her friends had taught her to think me one.—Who then would be trying a new and worse character?

And then Mrs. Greeme is a pious matron; who would not have been bias'd against the truth on any consideration. She used formerly, while there were any hopes of my reformation, to pray for me. She hardly continues the good custom, I doubt; for her worthy Lord makes no scruple, occasionally, to rave against me to man, woman, and child, as they come in his way. He is very undutiful, as thou knowest. Surely, I may say so; since all duties are reciprocal. But for Mrs. Greeme, poor woman! when my Lord has the gout, and is at the Lawn, and the chaplain not to be found, she prays by him, or reads a chapter to him in the Bible, or some other good book.

Was it not therefore right, to introduce such a good sort of woman to my beloved; and to leave them, without reserve, to their own talk?—And very busy in talk I saw they were, as they rode; and *felt* it too—For most charmingly glowed my cheeks.

I hope I shall be honest, I once more say: But as we frail mortals are not our own masters, at all times, I must endeavour to keep the dear creature unapprehensive, until I can get her to our acquaintance's in London, or to some other safe place there. Should I, in the interim, give her the least room for suspicion; or offer to restrain her, or refuse to leave her at her own will; she can make her appeals to strangers, and call the country in upon me; and, perhaps, throw herself upon her relations, on their own terms. And were I now to lose her, how unworthy should I be, to be the prince and leader of such a confraternity as ours!—How unable to look up among men! or to shew my face among women!—As things at present stand, she dare not own, that she went off against her own consent; and I have taken care to make all the *Implacables* believe, that she escaped with it.

She

She has received an answer from Miss Howe, to the letter written to her from St. Albans (a).

Whatever are the contents, I know not ; but she was drown'd in tears ; and I am the sufferer.

Miss Howe is a charming creature too ; but confoundedly smart and spiritfui. I am a good deal afraid of her. Her mother can hardly keep her in. I must continue to play off *old Antony*, by my *honest Joseph*, upon That Mother, in order to manage That daughter, and oblige my Beloved to an absolute dependence upon myself (b).

Mistress Howe is impatient of contradiction. So is Miss. A young lady who is sensible that she has all the maternal requisites herself, to be under maternal controul ;—fine ground for a man of intrigue to build upon !—A mother over-notable ; a daughter over-sensible ; and their Hickman, who is—over-neither, but merely a passive—

Only that I have an object still more desireable !—

Yet how unhappy that these two young ladies lived so near each other, and are so well acquainted ! Else how charmingly might I have managed them both !

But *one* man cannot have every woman worth having—Pity tho'—when the man is such a VERY clever fellow !

LETTER XII.

Mr. LOVELACE ; In Continuation.

NEVER was there such a pair of scribbling lovers as we ;—Yet perhaps whom it so much concerns to keep from each other what each writes. She *won't* have any thing else to do. I *would*, if she'd let me. I am not reform'd enough for a husband. *Patience is a virtue,*

(a) Vol. ii. Letter xlvii.

(b) Vol. i. p. 198.

a virtue, Lord M. says. *Slow and sure*, is another of his sentences. If I had not a great deal of that virtue, I should not have waited the Harlowes own time of ripening into execution my plots upon Themselves, and upon their Goddes-daughter.

My beloved has been writing to her saucy friend, I believe, all that has befallen her, and what has pass'd between us hitherto. She will possibly have fine subjects for her pen, if she be as minute, as I am to thee.

I would not be so barbarous, as to permit old Antony to set Goody Howe against her, did I not dread the consequences of the correspondence between the two young ladies. So lively the one, so vigilant, so prudent both, who would not wish to outwit such girls, and to be able to twirl them round his finger?

My charmer has written to her sister for her cloaths, for some gold, and for some of her books. What books can tell her more than she knows? But I can. So she had better study me.

She *may* write. She must be obliged to me at last, with all her pride. Miss Howe will be ready enough, indeed, to supply her; but I question, whether she can do it without her mother, who is as covetous as the grave. And my agent's agent Antony has already given the mother a hint, which will make her jealous of *pecuniaries*.

Besides, if Miss Howe has money by her, I can put her mother upon borrowing it of her.—Nor blame me, Jack, for contrivances that have their foundation in generosity. Thou knowest my spirit; and that I should be proud to lay an obligation upon my charmer, to the amount of half my estate. Lord M. has more for me than I can ever wish for. My predominant passion is *Girl*, not *Gold*; nor value I *This*, but as it helps me to *That*, and give me independence.

I was forced to put it into the sweet novice's head, as well for *my* sake as for hers (lest we should be trace-

able by *her* direction), whither to direct the sending of her cloaths, if they incline to do her that small piece of justice.

If they do, I shall begin to dread a reconciliation ; and must be forced to muse for a contrivance or two, to prevent it ; and to avoid mischief. For that (as I have told honest Joseph Leman) is a great point with me.

Thou wilt think me a sad fellow, I doubt.—But are not all rakes sad fellows ?—And thou, to thy little power, as bad as any ? If thou, dost all that's in thy head and thy heart to do, thou art worse than me ; for I do not, I assure thee.

I propos'd, and she consented, that her cloaths, or whatever else her relations should think fit to send her, should be directed to thee, at thy cousin Osgood's.—Let a special messenger, at my charge, bring me any letter, or portable parcel, that shall come—If not portable, give me notice of it. But thou'lt have no trouble of this sort from her relations, I dare be sworn. And, in this assurance, I will leave them, I think, to act upon their own heads. A man would have no more to answer for than needs must.

But one thing, while I think of it [It is of great importance to be attended to]—You must hereafter write to me in character, as I shall do to you. How know we into whose hands our letters may fall ? It would be a confounded thing to be blown up by a train of one's own laying.

Another thing remember ; I have chang'd my name : Chang'd it without an act of parliament. “Robert Huntingford” it is now. Continue *Esquire*. It is a respectable addition, altho' every sorry fellow assumes it, almost to the banishment of the usual travelling one of *Captain*. “To be left till called for, “at the posthouse at Hertford.”

Upon naming thee, she asked thy character. I gave thee a better than thou deservest, in order to do credit

credit to *myself*. Yet, I told her, that thou wert an awkward puppy; and This to do credit to *Thee*, that she may not, if ever she is to see thee, expect a cleverer fellow than she'll find; yet thy *apparent* awkwardness befriends thee not a little: For wert thou a slightly varlet, people would discover nothing extraordinary in thee: when they convers'd with thee: Whereas seeing a bear, they are surpriz'd to find in thee any thing that is like a man. Felicitate thyself then upon thy defects; which are so evidently thy principal perfections, and which occasion thee a distinction thou wouldst otherwise never have.

The lodgings we are in at present are not convenient. I was so delicate as to find fault with them, as communicating with each other, because I knew the lady would; and told her, That were I sure she was safe from pursuit, I would leave her in them, since such was her earnest desire. The devil's in't, if I don't banish even the *shadow* of mistrust from her heart. She must be an infidel against all reason and appearances, if I don't.

Here are two young likely girls, daughters of the widow Sorlings; that's the name of our landlady.

I have only, at present, admir'd them in their dairy-works. How greedily do the whole Sex swallow praise!—So pleas'd was I with the youngest, for the elegance of her works, that I kiss'd her, and she made me a courtesy for my condescension; and blush'd, and seem'd sensible all over: Encouragingly, yet innocently, she adjusted her handkerchief, and looked towards the door, as much as to say, She would not tell, were I to kiss her again.

Her elder sister popt upon her. The conscious girl blush'd again, and look'd so confounded, that I made an excuse for her which gratify'd both. Mrs. Betty, said I, I have been so much pleas'd with the neatness of your dairy-works, that I could not help saluting

your sister : You have *your* share of merit in them, I am sure—— Give me leave——

Good souls !—I like them both.— She courtesied too—How I love a grateful temper ! O that my Miss Harlowe were half so acknowleging !

I think I must get one of them to attend my charmer, when she removes.—The mother seems to be a notable woman. She had not best, however, be *too* notable : For, were she by suspicion to give a face of difficulty to the matter, it would prepare me for a tryal with one or both the daughters.

Allow me a little rhodomontade, Jack !——But really and truly my heart is fix'd. I can think of no creature breathing but my Gloriana.

L E T T E R XIII.

From Mr. LOVELACE ; In Continuation.

THIS is Wednesday; the day that I was to have lost my charmer for ever !—With what high satisfaction and hearts-ease can I now sit down, and triumph over my men in straw at Harlowe-Place ! Yet 'tis perhaps best for them, that she got off as she did. Who knows what consequences might have follow'd upon my attending her in ; or (if she had not met me) upon my projected visit, follow'd by my Myrmidons ?

But had I even gone in with her un-accompany'd, I think I had but little reason for apprehension : For well thou knowest, that the tame Spirits which value themselves upon reputation, and are held within the skirts of the law by political considerations only, may be compar'd to an infectious spider ; which will run into his hole the moment one of his threads is touched by a finger that can crush him, leaving all his toils defenceless, and to be brush'd down at the will of the potent invader. While a silly fly, that has neither courage nor strength to resist, no sooner gives notice by

by its buz and its struggle, of its being entangled, but out steps the self-circumscribed tyrant, winds round and round the poor insect, till he covers it with his bowel-spun toils; and when so fully secured, that it can neither move leg nor wing, suspends it, as if for a spectacle to be exulted over: Then stalking to the door of his cell, turns about, glotes over it at a distance; and, sometimes advancing, sometimes retreating, preys at leisure upon its vitals.

But now I think of it, will not this comparison do as well for the entangled girls, as the tame spirits?—Better o' my conscience!—'Tis but comparing the spider to us brave fellows; and it quadrates.

Whatever our hearts are in, our heads will follow. Begin with spiders, with flies, with what we will, the Girl is the centre of gravity, and we all naturally tend to it.

Nevertheless, to recur; I cannot but observe, that these tame spirits stand a poor chance in a fairly offensive war with such of us mad fellows, as are above all law, and scorn to skulk behind the hypocritical screen of reputation.

Thou knowest, that I never scrupled to throw myself among numbers of adversaries; the more the safer: One or two no fear, will take the part of a single adventurer, if not *intentionally*, in *fact*: holding him in, while others hold in the principal antagonist, to the augmentation of their mutual prowess, till both are prevailed upon to compromise, or one to absent. So that upon the whole, the law-breakers have the advantage of the law-keepers, all the world over; at least for a time, till they have run to the end of their race. Add to this, in the question between me and the Harlowes, that the whole family of them must know that they have injur'd me—Did they not, at their own church, cluster together like bees, when the saw me enter it? Nor knew they which should venture out first, when the Service was over.

James, indeed, was not there. If he had, he would perhaps have endeavour'd to *look* valiant. But there is a sort of valour in the *face*, which, by its *overbluster*, shews fear in the *heart*: Just such a face would James Harlowe's have been, had I made them a visit.

When I have had such a face and such a heart as that to deal with, I have been all calm and serene, and left it to the friends of such a one, as I have done to the Harlowe's, to do my work for me.

I am about mustering up in my memory, all that I have ever done, that has been thought praise-worthy, or but barely tolerable. I am afraid thou canst not help me to many remembrances of this sort; because I never was so bad as since I have known thee.

Have I not had it in my heart to do *some* good that thou canst remind me of? Study for me, Jack. I have recollected several instances, which I think will *tell in*:—But see if thou canst not help me to some which I may have forgot.

This I may venture to say, That the principal blot in my escutcheon is owing to these Girls, these confounded Girls. But for *Them*, I could go to church with a good conscience: But when I do, *There* they are. Every-where does Satan spread his snares for me!

But, now I think of it, what if our governors should appoint churches for the *women* only, and others for the men—Full as proper I think, for the promoting of *true piety* in both, [Much better than the synagogue-lattices] as separate boarding-schools for their *education*.

There are already male and female dedications of churches.

St. Swithin's, St. Stephen's St. Thomas's, St. George's, and so forth, might be appropriated to the men; and the Santa Katharina's, Santa Anna's, Santa Maria's, Santa Margaretta's, for the women!

Yet,

Yet, were it so, and life to be the forfeiture of being found at the female churches, I believe I should, like a second Clodius, change my dress, to come at my Portia or Calphurnia, tho' one the daughter of a Cato, the other the wife of a Cæsar.

But how I *excuse*! ——— Yet thou usedst to say, thou likedst my excursions. If thou dost, thou'lt have enow of them: For I never had a subject I so much adored; and with which I shall probably be compelled to have so much patience, before I strike the blow; if the blow I do strike.

But let me call myself back to my *recording*-subject—Thou needest not to remind me of my *Rosebud*. I have her in my head; and moreover have contrived to give my fair one a hint of that affair, by the agency of honest Joseph Leman (*a*); altho' I have not reaped the hoped-for credit of her acknowledgment.——

That's the devil; and it was always my hard fate—Every thing I do that is good, is but as I *ought*!—Every thing of a contrary nature is brought into the most glaring light against me!—Is this fair? Ought not a balance to be struck? and the credit carried to my account?—— Yet I must own too, that I half grudge Johnny this blooming maiden; for, in truth, I think a fine woman too rich a jewel to hang about a poor man's neck.

Surely, Jack, if I am in a fault in my universal adorations of the sex, the *women* in general ought to love me the better for it.

And so they do, I thank them heartily; except here and there a covetous little rogue comes cross me, who, under the pretence of loving virtue for its own sake, wants to have me all to herself.——

I have rambled enough.——

Adieu, for the present.

(a) See Vol. ii. p. 148, 149.——151, 152.

L E T-

The HISTORY of

LETTER XIV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Thursday Night, April 13.

I Always loved writing, and my unhappy situation gives me now enough of it; and you, I fear, too much.—I have had another very warm debate with Mr. Lovelace. It brought on the subject, which you advised me not to decline, when it handsomely offer'd. And I want to have either your acquittal or blame, for having suffer'd it to go off without effect.

The impatient wretch sent up to me several times, while I was writing my last to you, to desire my company; yet his business nothing particular; only to hear *him* talk. The man seems pleased with his own volubility; and, whenever he has collected together abundance of smooth things, he wants me to find ears for them.—Yet he need not; for I don't often gratify him either with giving him the praise, or shewing the pleasure in his verbosity, that he would be fond of.

When I had dispatched the letter, and given it to Mr. Hickman's friend, I was going up again: But he besought me to stop, and hear what he had to say.

Nothing, as I said, to any new purpose—but complainings, and those in a manner, and with an air, as I thought, that bordered upon insolence:——He could not live, he told me, unless he had more of my company, and of my *indulgence* too, than I had yet given him.

Hereupon I slept into the parlour, not a little out of humour with him; and the more, as he has very quietly taken up his quarters here, without talking of removing.

We began presently our angry conference. He provoked me; and I repeated several of the plainest things I had said before; and particularly told him, that I was every hour more and more dissatisfy'd with myself,

myself, and with him : That he was not a man, who, in my opinion, improv'd upon acquaintance : And that I should not be easy till he had left me to myself.

He might be surprized at my warmth, perhaps.— But really the man looked so like a simpleton ; hesitating, and having nothing to say for himself, or that should excuse the peremptoriness of his demand upon me [when he knew I was writing a letter, which a gentleman waited for], that I flung from him, declaring, that I would be mistress of my own time, and of my own actions, without being called to account for either.

He was very uneasy till he could again be admitted into my company. And when I was obliged to see him, which was sooner than I liked, never did man put on a more humble and respectful demeanour.

He told me, That he had, upon this occasion, been entering into himself, and had found a great deal of reason to blame himself for an impatience and inconsideration, which, altho' he meant nothing by it, must be very disagreeable to one of my delicacy. That having always aimed at a manly sincerity and openness of heart, he had not till now discovered, that both were very consistent with that true politeness, which he feared he had too much disregarded, while he sought to avoid the contrary extreme ; knowing, that in me he had to deal with a lady, who despised an hypocrite, and who was above all flattery. But, from this time forth, I should find such an alteration in his whole behaviour, as might be expected from a man, who knew himself to be honoured with the presence and conversation of a person, who had the most delicate mind in the world—that was his flourish.

I said, That he might perhaps expect congratulation upon the discovery he had just now made, That true politeness and sincerity were very compatible : But that I, who had, by a perverse fate, been thrown into his company, had abundant reason for regret,
that

that he had not sooner found this out :—Since, I believed, very few men of birth and education were strangers to it.

He knew not, *neither*, he said, that he had so badly behav'd himself, as to deserve so very severe a rebuke.

Perhaps not. But he might, if so, make another discovery from what I had said ; which might be to *my own* disadvantage : Since, if he had so much reason to be satisfied with *himself*, he would see what an ungenerous person he spoke to, who, when he seem'd to give himself airs of humility, which perhaps, he thought beneath him to assume, had not the civility to make him a compliment upon them ; but was ready to take him at his word.

He had long, with infinite pleasure, the pretended flattery-hater said, admired my superior talents, and a wisdom in so young a Lady, perfectly surprizing !

Lady he calls me, at every word, perhaps in compliment to himself. As I endeavour to repeat his words with exactness, you'll be pleas'd, once for all, to excuse me for repeating This. I have no title to it. And I am sure I am too much mortify'd at present to take any pride in that, or any other of his compliments.

Let him stand ever so low in my opinion, he said, he should believe all were just ; and that he had nothing to do, but to govern himself for the future by my example, and by the standard I should be pleas'd to give him.

I told him, I knew better, than to value myself upon his volubility of speech : As he pretended to pay so preferable a regard to sincerity, he should confine himself to the strict rules of truth, when he spoke of me, to myself : And then, although he should be so kind as to imagine, he had *reason* to make me a compliment, he would have much more to pride himself in his arts, that had made so *extraordinary* a young creature, so great a fool.—

Really,

Really, my dear, the man deserves not politer treatment! — And then has he not made a fool, an egregious fool, of me? — I am afraid he thinks so himself. —

He was surpriz'd! He was amaz'd! at so strange a turn upon him! — He was very unhappy, that nothing he could do or say would give me a good opinion of him. He wish'd I would let him know, what he *could* do to obtain my confidence —

I told him, I desir'd his absence, of all things. I saw not, that my friends thought it worth their while to give me disturbance: Therefore, if he would set out for London, or Berkshire, or whither he pleased, it would be most agreeable to me, and most reputable too.

He would do so, he said, he intended to do so, the moment I was in a place to my liking — in a place convenient for me.

This would be so, I told him, when he was not here, to break in upon me, and make the apartments inconvenient.

He did not think this place safe; and as I had not had thoughts of staying here, he had not been so solicitous, as otherwise he should have been, to injoin privacy to his servants, nor to Mrs. Greame, at her leaving me; and there were two or three gentlemen in the neighbourhood, he said, with whose servants his gossiping rascals had scraped acquaintance: So that he could not think of leaving me here unguarded and unattended. — But fix upon any place in England, where I could be out of danger, and undiscovered, and he would go to the furthestmost part of the king's dominions, if, by doing so, he could make me easy.

I told him plainly, that I should never be in humour with myself for meeting him; nor with him, for seducing me away: That my regrets increased, instead of diminished: That my reputation was wounded: That nothing I could do would now retrieve it: And
that

that he must not wonder, if every hour grew more and more uneasy both with myself and him : That upon the whole, I was willing to take care of myself ; and when *he* had left me, I should best know what to resolve upon, and whither to go.

He wish'd, he said, he were at liberty, without giving me offence, or being thought to intend to infringe upon the articles that I had stipulated and insisted upon, to make one humble proposal to me.— But the sacred regard he was determin'd to pay to all my injunctions (reluctantly as I had on Monday last put it into his power to serve me,) would not permit him to make it, unless I would promise to excuse him, if I did not approve of it.

I asked, in some confusion, What he would say ?

He prefaced and paraded on ; and then out came, with great diffidence, and many apologies, and a bashfulness which sat very awkwardly upon him, a proposal of speedy solemnization : Which, he said, would put all right : would make my first three or four months, which otherwise must be passed in obscurity and apprehension, a round of visits and visitings to and from all his relations ; To Miss Howe ; To whom I pleased : And would pave the way to the reconciliation I had so much at heart.

Your advice had great weight with me just then, as well as his reasons, and the consideration of my unhappy situation : But what could I say ? I wanted somebody to speak for me : I could not, all at once, act as if I thought, that *all punctilio was at an end*. I was unwilling to suppose it *was* so soon.

The man saw I was not angry at his motion. I only blush'd up to the ears ; that I am sure I did : Look'd silly, and like a fool.

He wants not courage. Would he have had me catch at his first, at his *very* first word ?—I was *silent* too !—And do not the bold sex take silence for a mark of favour ?—Then, *so lately* in my father's house !

Having,

Having, also, declared to him in my letters, before I had your advice, that I would not think of marriage, till he had passed thro' a state of probation, as I may call it—How 'was it possible, I could encourage, with very ready signs of approbation, such an early proposal? especially so soon after the free treatment he had provoked from me.—If I were to die, I could not.

He look'd at me with great confidence; as if (notwithstanding his contradictory bashfulness) he would look me through, while my eye but now-and-then could glance at him. He begg'd my pardon with great obsequiousness: He was *afraid* I would think he deserv'd no other answer, but that of a contemptuous silence. True Love was fearful of offending—[Take care, Lovelace, thought I, how yours is tried by that rule]. Indeed so sacred a regard [foolish man!] would he have to all my declarations made before I honour'd him——

I would hear him no further; but withdrew in too visible confusion, and left him to make his nonsential flourishes to himself.

I will only add, that, if he really wishes for a speedy solemnization, he never could have had a luckier time to press for my consent to it. But he let it go off; and indignation has taken place of it: And now it shall be my point, to get him at a distance from me.

I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever faithful and obliged servant,

CL. H.

L E T T E R X V.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

WH A T can be done with a woman who is above flattery, and despises all praise but that which flows from the approbation of her own heart?

But why will this admirable creature urge her destiny? Why will she defy the power she is abso-

lutely dependent upon?—Why will she still wish to my face, that she had never left her father's house?—Why will she deny me her company, till she makes me lose my patience, and lay myself open to her resentment?—And why, when she is offended, does she carry her indignation to the utmost length, that a scornful beauty, in the very height of her power and pride, can go?

Is it prudent, think'st thou, in her circumstances, to tell me, *repeatedly* to tell me, That she is every hour more and more dissatisfy'd with herself and me? That I am not one, who improve upon her, in my conversation and address? [Could thou, Jack, bear this from a captive!] That she shall not be easy while she is with me? That she was thrown upon me by a perverse fate? That she knew better than to value herself upon my volubility? That if I thought she deserv'd the compliments I made her, I might pride myself in my arts, which had made a fool of so extraordinary a person? That she should never forgive herself for *meeting me*, nor me for *seducing* her away? [Her very words!] That her regrets increase instead of diminish? That she would take care of herself; and since her friends thought it not worth while to pursue her, she would be left to that care? That I should make Mrs. Sorlings's house more agreeable by my absence?—And, go to Berks, to town, or wherever I would [to the devil, I suppose], with all her heart?

The impolitic charmer!—To a temper so vindictive as she thinks mine! To a free liver, as she believes me to be, who has her in his power!—I was *before*, as thou knowest, balancing; now this scale, now that, the heaviest. I only waited to see how *her* will would work, how *mine* would lead me on. Thou see'st what bias here takes—And wilt thou doubt that mine will be determin'd by it?—Were not her faults before this numerous enough?—Why will she put me upon looking back?—

I will

I will sit down to argue with myself by-and-by, and thou shalt be acquainted with the result.

If thou knewest, if thou but beheldest, the abject slave she made me look like!—I had given myself high airs, as *she* call'd them: But they were airs that shew'd my love for her: That shew'd I could not live out of her company. But she took me down with a vengeance! She made me look about me. So much advantage had she over me; such severe turns upon me; by my soul, Jack, I had hardly a word to say for myself. I am ashamed to tell thee, what a poor creature she made me look like!—But I could have told her something that would have humbled her pretty pride at the instant, had she been in a proper place, and proper company about her.

To such a place then—and where she cannot fly me—And *then* to see how my will works, and what can be done by the *amorous See-saw*; now humble; now proud; now expecting, or demanding; now submitting, or acquiescing—till I have tired resistance. But these hints are at present enough—I may further explain myself as I go along; and as I confirm or recede in my future motions.—If she *will* revive past disobligations!—If she *will*—But no more—No more, as I said, at present, of threatenings.

LETTER XVI.

Mr. LOVELACE; In Continuation.

AND do I not see that I shall need nothing but patience, in order to have all power with me? For what shall we say, if all these complaints of a character wounded; these declarations of increasing regrets for meeting me; of resentments never to be got over for my *seducing* her away: These angry commands to leave her: What shall we say, If all were to mean nothing but MATRIMONY?—And what if

my forbearing to enter upon that subject come out to be the true cause of her petulance and uneasiness?

I had once before play'd about the skirts of the irrevocable obligation; but thought myself obliged to speak in clouds, and to run away from the subject, as soon as she took my meaning, lest she should imagine it to be ungenerously urged, now she was in some sort in my power, as she had forbid me, beforehand, to touch upon it, till I were in a state of visible reformation, and till a reconciliation with her friends were probable. But now, out-argued, out-talented, and pushed so vehemently to *leave one*, whom I had no good pretence to *hold*, if she *would* go; and who could so easily, if I had given her cause to doubt, have thrown herself into other protection, or have return'd to Harlowe-Place and Solmes; I spoke out upon the subject, and offer'd reasons, altho' with infinite doubt and hesitation [*lest she should be offended at me*, Belford!] why she should assent to the legal tie, and make me the happiest of men. And O how the mantled cheek, the downcast eye, the silent, yet trembling lip, and the heaving bosom, a sweet collection of heighten'd beauties, gave evidence, that the tender was not mortally offensive!

Charming creature, thought I [But I charge thee, that thou let not any of the sex know my exultation] Is it so *soon* come to this?—Am I *already* lord of the destiny of a Clarissa Harlowe!—Am I already the reformed man thou resolv'dst I *should* be, before I had the *least* encouragement given me? Is it thus, that *the more thou knowest me*, the *less thou seest reason to approve of me*?—And can art and design enter into a breast so celestial; To banish me from thee, to insist so rigorously upon my absence, in order to bring me closer to thee, and make the blessing dear?—Well do *thy* arts justify *mine*; and encourage me to let loose my plotting genius upon thee.

But

But let me tell thee, charming maid, if thy wishes are not all to be answer'd, that thou hast yet to account to me for thy reluctance to go off with me, at a crisis when thy going off was necessary to avoid being forced into the nuptial fetters with a wretch, that were he not thy aversion, thou wert no more honest to thy own merit, than to me.

I am *accustomed* to be preferr'd, let me tell thee, by thy equals in rank too, tho' thy inferiors in merit; but who is not so! And shall I marry a woman, who has given me reason to doubt the preference she has for me?

No, my dearest love,—I have too sacred a regard for thy *injunctions*, to let them be broke thro', even by thyself. Nor will I take-in thy full meaning, by blushing silence only. Nor shalt thou give me room to doubt, whether it be necessity or love, that inspires this condescending impulse.

Upon these principles, what had I to do, but to construe her silence into contemptuous displeasure? And I begg'd her pardon, for making a motion, which, I had so much *reason* to fear, would offend her: For the future I would pay a sacred regard to her previous injunctions, and prove to her, by all my conduct, the truth of that observation, That true love is always fearful of offending!——

And what could the Lady say to this? methinks thou askest.

Say!—Why she look'd vex'd, disconcerted, teaz'd; was at a loss, as I thought, whether to be more angry with herself, or me. She turn'd about, however, as if to hide a starting tear; and drew a sigh into two or three but just audible quavers, trying to suppress it; and withdrew, leaving me master of the field.

Tell me not of politeness: Tell me not of generosity: Tell me not of compassion:—Is she not a match for me? *More* than a match? Does she not out-do me at every fair weapon? Has she not made me,

doubt her love? Has she not taken officious pains to declare, that she was not averse to Solmes for any respect she had to me? and her sorrow for putting herself out of *his* reach; that is to say, for meeting me?

Then what a triumph would it be to the *Harlowe* pride, were I now to marry this Lady?—A family beneath my own!—No one in it worthy of an alliance with, but her!—My own estate not contemptible!—Living within the bounds of it, to avoid dependence upon *their* betters, and obliged to no man living!—My expectations still so much *more* considerable—My person, my talents—not to be despised, surely—Yet rejected by them with scorn:—Obliged to carry on an underhand address to their daughter, when two of the most considerable families in the kingdom have made overtures, which I have declined, partly for her sake, and partly because I never will marry, if *she* be not the person: To be forced to *steal* her away; not only from *them*, but from *herself*:—And must I be brought to implore forgiveness and reconciliation from the Harlowes?—Beg to be acknowledged as the *son* of a gloomy tyrant, whose only boast is his riches? As a *brother* to a wretch, who has conceived immortal hatred to me; and to a sister who was beneath my attempts, or I would have had her *in my own way* [and that with a tenth part of the trouble and pains that her sister, whom she has so barbarously insulted, has cost me, yet not a step advanced with *her*?] And, finally, as a *nephew* to uncles, who valuing themselves upon their *acquired* fortunes, would insult me, as creeping to them on that account?—Forbid it the blood of the Lovelaces, that your *last*, and, let me say, not the *meanest* of your stock, should thus creep, thus fawn, thus lick the dust, for for a WIFE!—

Proceed anon.

L E T-

LETTER XVII.

From Mr. LOVELACE ; In Continuation.

BUT is it not the divine Clarissa [Harlowe let me not say ; my soul spurns them all but her] whom I am thus by implication threatening ? — If virtue be the true nobility, how is she ennobled, and how would an alliance with her ennoble me, were there no drawbacks from the family she is sprung from, and prefers to me ?

But again, let me stop.---Is there not something wrong ; *has* there not been something wrong in this divine creature ?---And will not the reflections upon that wrong [what tho' it may be construed in my favour ?] make me unhappy, when *novelty* has lost its charms, and she is mind and person all my own ?---Libertines are nicer, if *at all* nice, than other men. They seldom meet with the stand of virtue in the women whom they attempt. And by those they have met with, they judge of all the rest. *Importunity* and *Opportunity* no woman is proof against, especially from a persevering lover, who knows how to suit temptations to inclinations. This, thou knowest, is a prime article of the rake's creed.

And what ! (methinks thou askest with surprize) Dost thou question this most admirable of women ? — The virtue of a CLARISSA dost thou question ?

I do not, I dare not question it. My reverence for her will not let me, *directly*, question it. But let me, in my turn, ask thee---Is not, may not her virtue be founded rather in *pride* than *principle* ? — Whose daughter is she — And is she not a *daughter* ? --If impeccable, how came she by her impeccability ? -- The pride of setting an example to her sex has run away with her hitherto, and may have made her till *now* invincible --- But is not that pride abated ? ---

What

What may not both men and women be brought to do, in a mortify'd state? What mind is superior to calamity?—Pride is perhaps the principal bulwark of female virtue. Humble a woman, and may she not be *effectually* humbled?

Then who says, Miss Clarissa Harlowe is the paragon of virtue? Is virtue itself?

All who know her, and have heard of her, it will be answer'd.

Common bruit!—Is virtue to be established by common bruit only?—Has her virtue ever been *proved*?—Who has dared to try her virtue?

I told thee, I would sit down to argue with myself; and I have drawn myself into the argumentation before I was aware.

Let me enter into a strict discussion of this subject.

I know how ungenerous an appearance what I have said, and what I have farther to say, on this topic, will have from me: But am I not bringing virtue to the touchstone, with a view to exalt it, if it come out to be virtue?—Avaunt then, for one moment, all consideration that may arise from a weakness, which some would miscall *gratitude*; and is oftentimes the corrupter of a heart not ignoble!

To the test then. And I will bring this charming creature to the strictest test, that all the sex, who may be shewn any passages in my letters [And I know thou chearest the hearts of all thy acquaintance with such detached parts of mine, as tend not to dishonour characters or reveal names. And this gives me an appetite to oblige thee by *interlardment*] that all the sex, I say, may see what they ought to be; what is expected from them; and if they have to deal with a person of reflection and punctilio [*pride*, if thou wilt], how careful they ought to be, by a regular and uniform conduct, not to give him cause to think lightly of them by favours granted, which may be interpreted into *natural weakness*. For is not a wife the keeper
of a

of a man's honour? And do not her faults bring more disgrace upon a husband, than even upon herself?

It is not for nothing, Jack, that I have disliked the life of shackles!—

To the test, then, as I said, since now I have the question brought home to me, Whether I am to have a wife? And whether she be to be a wife at the first, or at the second hand?

I will proceed fairly; I will do the dear creature not only strict, but generous justice; for I will try her by her own judgment, as well as by our principles.

She blames herself for having corresponded with me, a man of free character; and one indeed whose *first* view it was, to draw her into this correspondence; and who succeeded in it, by means unknown to herself.

Now, what were her inducements to this correspondence;—If not what her niceness makes her *think* blame-worthy, why does she blame herself?

Has she been *capable* of error?—Of persisting in that error?

Whoever was the *tempter*, that is not the thing; nor what the *temptation*. The *fact*, the *error*, is now before us.

Did she persist in it against parental prohibition?

She owns she did.

Was there ever known to be a daughter who had higher notions of the filial duty, of the parental authority?

Never.

What must be those inducements, how strong, that were too strong for duty, in a daughter so *dutiful*?—What must *my* thought have been of them, what *my* hopes built upon them, at the time, taken in this light?

Well, but it will be said, That her principal view was, to prevent mischief between her brother and her
othe

other friends, and the man vilely insulted by them all.

But why should she be more concerned for the safety of others, than they were for their own?—And had not the *rencontre* then happen'd?—Was a person of virtue to be prevailed upon to break through her *apparent*, her *acknowledged* duty, upon *any* consideration?—Much less was she to be so prevailed upon to prevent an *apprehended* evil only?

Thou, Lovelace, the tempter (thou'lt again break out and say), to be the accuser!

But I am *not* the accuser. I am an arguer only, and, in my heart, all the time acquit and worship the divine creature. But let me, nevertheless, examine, whether the acquittal be owing to her *merit*, or to my *weakness*, the true name for love.

But shall we suppose another motive?—And that is LOVE; a motive which all the world will excuse her for.—But let me tell all the world that do, *not* because they *ought*, but because all the world is apt to be misled by it.

Let LOVE then be the motive:—Love of *whom*?
A *Lovelace* is the answer.

Is there but one Lovelace in the world?—May not more Lovelaces be attracted by so fine a figure? By such exalted qualities?—It was her character that drew me to her: And it was her beauty and good sense, that rivetted my chains; and now, all together make me think her a subject worthy of my attempts; worthy of my ambition.

But has she had the candor, the openness, to *acknowledge* that love?

She has not.

Well then, if love it be at bottom, is there not another vice lurking beneath the shadow of that love?—Has she not *affectation*?—Or is it *pride of heart*?

And

And what results?—Is then the divine Clarissa Harlowe capable of *loving* a man whom she ought *not* to love?—And is she capable of *affection*? And is her virtue founded in *pride*?—And, if this answer be affirmative, must she not then be a *woman*?

And can she keep this lover at bay?—Can she make *him*, who has been accustomed to triumph over other women, tremble?—Can she so conduct herself, as to make him, at times, question whether she loves *him* or *any* man; yet not have the requisite command over the passion itself in steps of the highest consequence to her honour, as *she* thinks [I am trying her, Jack, by her own thoughts]---but suffer herself to be provoked to promise to abandon her father's house, and go off with him, knowing his character; and even conditioning not to marry till improbable and remote contingencies were to come to pass---What tho' the provocations were such as would justify any other woman; yet was a CLARISSA to be susceptible to provocations, which she thinks *herself* highly censurable for being so much moved by?

But let us see the dear creature resolving to revoke her promise; yet meeting her lover; a bold and intrepid man, who was more than once before disappointed by her; and who comes, as she must think, prepared to expect the fruits of her appointment, and resolved to carry her off.---And let us see him actually carrying her off; and having her at his mercy---May there not be, I repeat, other Lovelaces; other like intrepid persevering enterprizers; altho' they may not go to work in the same way?

And has then a CLARISSA [herself her judge] failed?—In such great points failed?—And may she not *further* fail?—Fail in the *greatest* point, to which all the other points in which she has failed, have but a natural tendency?

Nor say thou, that virtue, in the eye of heaven, is as much a *manly* as a *womanly* grace [By virtue in this place I mean chastity, and to be superior to temptation;

tation ; my Clarissa out of the question]. Nor ask thou, Shall the man be guilty, yet expect the woman to be guiltless, and even unsuspectable ?—Urge thou not these arguments, I say, since the wife, by a failure, may do much more injury to the husband, than the husband can do to the wife, and not only to her husband, but to all his family, by obtruding another man's children in his possessions, perhaps to the exclusion of (at least to a participation) with his own ; he believing them all the time to be his. In the eye of heaven, therefore, the sin *cannot* be equal. Besides, I have read in some place, *that the woman was made for the man, not the man for the woman*. Virtue then is less to be dispensed with in the woman than in the man.

Thou, Lovelace (methinks some better man than thyself will say), to expect such perfection in a woman !——

Yes, I, may I answer. Was not the great Cæsar a great Rake as to women ?—Was he not called, by his very soldiers, on one of his triumphant entries into Rome, *The bald-pated lecher* ?—and warning given of him to the *wives*, as well as to the daughters, of his fellow-citizens ?—Yet did not Cæsar repudiate his wife for being only in company with Clodius, or rather because Clodius, tho' by surprize upon her, was found in hers ? And what was the reason he gave for it ?—It was this (tho' a rake himself, as I have said), and only this—*The wife of Cæsar must not be suspected* !——

Cæsar was not a prouder man than Lovelace.---

Go to then, Jack ; nor say, nor let any-body say, in thy hearing, that Lovelace, a man valuing himself upon his ancestry, is singular in his expectations of a wife's purity, tho' not pure himself.

As to my CLARISSA, I own, that I hardly think, there ever was such an angel of a woman. But has she not, as above, already taken steps, which she herself condemns ? Steps, which the world, and her own family,

family, did not think her *capable* of taking?—
And for which her own family will not forgive her?

Nor think it strange, that I refuse to hear any thing pleaded in behalf of a standard virtue, from high provocations:—Are not provocations and temptations the tests of virtue?—A standard virtue must not be allowed to be *provoked* to destroy or annihilate itself.

May not then the success of him, who could carry her *thus far*, be allowed to be an encouragement for him to try to carry her *farther*?—'Tis but to try, Jack—Who will be afraid of a trial for this divine lady?—Thou knowest, that I have more than once, twice or thrice, been tempted to make this trial upon young ladies of name and character: But never yet found one of them to hold me out for a month; nor so long as could puzzle my invention. I have concluded against the whole sex upon it. And now if I have not found a virtue that cannot be corrupted, I will swear that there is not one such in the whole sex. Is not then the whole sex concerned that this trial should be made?—And who is it that knows her, that would not stake upon her head the honour of the whole?—Let her who would refuse it, come forth, and desire to stand in her place.

I must assure thee, that I have a prodigious high opinion of virtue; as I have of all those graces and excellencies, which I have not been able to attain myself.—Every free liver would not *say* this, nor *think* thus—Every argument he uses, condemnatory of his own actions, as some would think—But ingenuity was ever a signal part of my character.

Satan, whom thou mayest, if thou wilt, in this case, call my instigator, put the good man of old upon the severest trials—To his behaviour under these trials, that good man owed his honour and his future rewards. An innocent person, if doubted, must wish to be brought to a fair and candid trial.

Rinaldo, indeed, in Ariosto, put the Mantuan knight's cup of trial from him, which was to be the proof of his wife's chastity (a)---This was his argument for forbearing the experiment : ' Why should I seek a thing I should be loth to find ? My wife is a woman : The sex is frail. I cannot believe better of her than I do. It will be to my own loss, if I find reason to think worse.' But Rinaldo would not have refused the trial of the lady, before she became his wife, and when he might have availed himself by detecting her.

For my part, I would not have put the cup from me, tho' married, had it been but in hope of finding reason to confirm my *good* opinion of my wife's honour ; and that I might know whether I had a snake or a dove in my bosom.

To my point-----What must that virtue be, which will not stand a trial ?-----What that woman, who would wish to shun it ?

Well then, a trial seems necessary for the further establishment of the honour of so excellent a creature.

And who shall put her to this trial ?---Who, but the man, who has, as she thinks, already induced her, in *lesser* points, to swerve ?---And this for her *own sake*, in a double sense-----Not only, as he has been able to make some impression, but as she regrets the impression made ; and so may be presumed to be guarded against his further attempts.

The situation she is at present in, it must be confessed, is a disadvantageous one to her : But if she overcome, that will redound to her honour.

Shun

(a) *The story is, That whoever drank of this cup, if his wife were chaste, could drink without spilling : If otherwise, the contrary. See Ariosto's Orlando Furioso, Book xliii.*

Shun not, therefore, my dear soul, further trials, nor hate me for making them. — For what woman can be said to be virtuous till she has been tried?

Nor is one effort, one trial, to be sufficient. Why? Because a woman's heart may be at one time *adamant*, at another *wax*. — As I have often experienced. And so, no doubt, hast thou.

A fine time on't, methinks, thou sayest, would the women have, if they were all to be tried!

But, Jack, I am not, for that, neither. Tho' I am a rake, I am not a rake's friend; except thine and company's.

And be this one of the morals of my tedious discussion——‘ Let the little rogues who would not be *put to the question*, as I may call it, choose accordingly——Let them prefer to their favour, good honest sober fellows, who have not been used to play dogs tricks: Who will be willing to take them as they *offer*; and who, being tolerable themselves, are not suspicious of others.’

But what, methinks thou askest, is to become of the lady, if she fail?

What?——Why will she not, *if once subdued*, be *always subdued*? Another of our libertine maxims——And what an immense pleasure to a marriage-hater, what rapture to thought, to be able to prevail upon such a lady as Miss Clarissa Harlowe to live with him, without *real* change of name!

But if she resist——If nobly she stand her trial——

Why then I will marry her, to be sure; and bless my stars for such an angel of a wife.

But will she not hate thee?——Will she not refuse——

No, no, Jack!——Circumstanced and situated as we are, I am not afraid of that.—And hate me!——Why should she hate the man who loves her upon proof?——

And then for a little hint at *reprizal*—Am I not justify'd in my resolutions of trying *her* virtue; who is resolved, as I may say, to try *mine*?—Who has declared, that she will not marry me, till she has hopes' of my reformation?

And now to put an end to this sober argumentation, wilt thou not thyself [whom I have supposed an advocate for the lady, because I know that Lord M. has put thee upon using the interest he thinks thou hast in me, to persuade me to enter the pale; *wilt thou not thyself*] allow me to try, if I cannot awaken the *woman* in her?—To try, if she, with all that glowing symmetry of parts, and that full bloom of vernal graces, by which she attracts every eye, be really inflexible, as to the grand article?

Let me begin then, as opportunity presents.—I will—And watch her every step to find one sliding one; her every moment, to find the moment critical. And the rather, as she spares not me, but takes every advantage that offers, to puzzle and plague me; nor expects, nor thinks me to be a good man. If she be a *woman*, and *love* me, I shall surely catch her once tripping: For Love was ever a traitor to its harbourer: And *Love within*, and *I without*, she'll be *more* than woman, as the poet says, or *I less* than man, if I succeed not.

Now, Belford, all is out. The lady is mine; shall be *more* mine.—Marriage, I see, is in my power, now she is so [Else perhaps it had not]. If I can have her *without*, who can blame me for trying? If *not*, great will be her glory, and my future confidence.—And well will she merit the sacrifice I shall make her of my liberty; and from all her sex honours next to divine, for giving a proof that there was once a woman whose virtue no trials, no stratagems, no temptations, even from the man she hated not, could overpower.

Now

Now will thou see all my circulation: As in a glass wilt thou see it.—CABALA, however, is the word (a), nor let the secret escape thee even in thy dreams.

Nobody doubts, that she is to be my wife. Let her pass for such, when I give the word. Mean-time Reformation shall be my stalking-horse; some one of the women in London, if I can get her thither, my bird.—And so much for this time.

LETTER XVIII.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[In answer to letters viii. xiv.]

DON'T be so much concerned, my dearest friend, at the bickerings between my mamma and me. We love one another dearly notwithstanding. If my mamma had not me to find fault with, she must find fault with somebody else. And as to me, I am a very saucy girl; and were there not this occasion, there would be some other to shew it.

You have heard me say, that this was always the case between us.—You could not otherwise have known it. For when you was with us, you harmonized us both; and indeed I was always more afraid of you than of my mamma. But then that awe is accompanied with love. Your reproofs (as I have always found) are so charmingly mild and instructive! so evidently calculated to improve, and not to provoke, that a generous temper must be amended by them.—But here now, mind my mamma, when you are not with us—*You shall, I tell you, Nancy!—I will have it so!—Don't I know best!—I won't be disobey'd!*—How can a daughter of spirit bear such
L 3 language!

(a) This word, whenever used by any of the gentlemen, was agreed to imply an inviolable secret.

language ! Such looks too with the language ; and not have a longing mind to disobey ?

Don't advise me, my dear, to obey my mamma in her prohibition of corresponding with you. She has no reason for it. Nor would she of her own judgment have prohibited me. That odd old ambling soul your uncie (whose visits are frequenter than ever), instigated by your malicious and selfish brother and sister, is the occasion. And they only have borrowed my mamma's lips, at the distance they are from you, for a sort of speaking-trumpet for them. The prohibition, once more I say, cannot come from her heart : But if it did, is so much danger to be apprehended from my continuing to write to one of my own sex, as if I wrote to one of the other ? Don't let dejection and disappointment, and the course of oppression which you have run thro', weaken your mind, my dearest creature ; and make you see inconveniencies, where there possibly cannot be any. If your talent is *scribbling*, as you call it ; so is mine—And I will scribble on, at all opportunities ; and to you ; let 'em say what they will.—Nor let your letters be filled with the self-accusations you mention : There is no cause for them.—I wish, that your Anna Howe, who continues in her mother's house, were but half so good as Miss Clarissa Harlowe, who has been driven out of her father's.

I will say nothing upon your letter to your sister, till I see the effect it will have. You hope, you tell me, that you shall have your money and cloaths sent you, notwithstanding what I write of my opinion to the contrary.—I am sorry to have it to acquaint you, that I have just now heard, that they have sat in council upon your letter : and that your mamma was the only person, who was for sending you your things ; and was over-ruled. I charge you therefore to accept of my offer, as by my last ; and give me particular directions for what you want, that I can supply you with besides.

Don't

Don't set your thoughts so much upon a reconciliation, as to prevent your laying hold of any handsome opportunity to give yourself a protector; such a one as the man will be, who I imagine, husband-like, will let nobody insult you but himself.

What could he mean, by letting slip such a one as that you mention?—I don't know how to blame you neither.—How could you go beyond silence and blushes, when the foolish fellow came with his observances of the restrictions which you laid him under when in another situation? But, as I told you above, you really strike people into awe. And, upon my word, you did not spare him.

I repeat what I said in my last, that you have a very nice part to act: And I will add, that you have a mind that is much too delicate for your part. But when the lover is exalted, the lady must be humbled. He is naturally proud and saucy. I doubt, you must engage his *pride*, which he calls his *honour*: And that you must throw off a little more of the veil. And I would have you restrain your wishes before him, that you had not met him; and the like.—What signifies wishing, my dear?—He will not bear it. You can hardly expect that he will.

Nevertheless it vexes me to the very bottom of my pride, that any wretch of that sex should have such a triumph over such a lady.

I cannot, however, but say, that I am charmed with your spirit. So much sweetness, where sweetness is requisite; so much spirit, where spirit is called for.—What a *true* magnanimity!

But I doubt, in your present circumstances, you must endeavour after a little more of the reserve, and palliate a little.—That humility which he puts on when you rise upon him, is not natural to him.

Methinks I see the man hesitating, and looking like the fool you paint him, under your corrective superiority!

riority!—But he is not a fool. Don't put him upon mingling resentment with his love.

You are very serious, my dear, in the first of the two letters before me, in relation to Mr. Hickman and me; and in relation to my mamma and me. But, as to the latter, you must not be too grave. If we are not well together at one time, we are not ill together at another.—And while I am able to make my mamma smile in the midst of the most angry fit she ever fell into on the present occasion (tho' sometimes she would not, if she could help it), it is a very good sign—A sign that displeasure can never go deep, or be lasting. And then a kind word, or kind look, to her favourite Hickman, sets the one in raptures, and the other in tolerable humour at any time.

But your case pains me at heart; and with all my levity, they must *both* sometimes partake of that pain, which must continue as long as you are in a state of uncertainty; and especially as I was not able to prevail for that protection for you, which would have prevented the unhappy step, the necessity for which, we both, with so much reason, deplore.

I have only to add (and yet that is needless to tell you), That I am, and will ever be,

Your affectionate friend and servant,

ANNA HOWE.

L E T T E R XIX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

YOU tell me, my dear, that my cloaths and the little matter of money I left behind me, will not be sent me.—But I will still hope. It is yet early days. When their passions subside, they will better consider of it; and especially as I have my ever dear and excellent mamma for my friend, in this request.

—O

— O the sweet indulgence ! how has my heart bled, and how does it still bleed for her !

You advise me not to depend upon a reconciliation. I do not depend upon it. I cannot. But nevertheless it is the wish next my heart. And as to this man, what can I do ? You see that marriage is not absolutely in my own power, if I were inclin'd to prefer it to the trial which I think I ought to have principally in view to make for a reconciliation.

You say he is proud and insolent. Indeed he is. But can it be your opinion, that he intends to humble me down to the level of his mean pride ?

And what mean you, my dear friend, when you say, that I must throw off a *little more of the veil* ?—Indeed I never knew that I wore one. Let me assure you, that if I see any thing in Mr. Lovelace that looks like a design to humble me, his insolence shall never make me discover a weakness unworthy of a person distinguished by your friendship ; that is to say, unworthy either of my sex, or of my former self,

But I hope, as I am out of all other protection, that he is not capable of mean or low resentments. What extraordinary trouble I have given him, may he not thank himself for ?—His character, which as I have told him, gave pretence to my brother's antipathy, he may lay it to, if he pleases.—And did I ever make him any promises ? Did I ever profess a love for him ?—Did I ever wish for the continuance of his address ?—Had not my brother's violence precipitated matters, would not my indifference to him, in all likelihood (as I designed it should), have tired out his proud spirit (*a*), and made him set out for London, where he used chiefly to reside ? And if he *had*, would there not have been an end of all his pretensions and hopes ? For no encouragement had I given him : Nor did I then correspond with him. Nor, believe me, should I have begun to do so—the fatal

(*a*) See Vol. I. p. 24.

fatal rencounter not having then happen'd; which drew me in afterwards for others sakes (fool that I was!), and not for my own. And can you think, or can he, that even this but temporarily intended correspondence [which, by the way, my dear mamma connived at (a)] would have ended thus, had I not been driven on one hand, and teased on the other, to continue it; the occasion which had at first induced it, continuing? What pretence then has he, were I to be absolutely in his power, to avenge himself on me, for the faults of others; and thro' which I have suffered more than he? It cannot, cannot be, that I should have cause to apprehend him to be so ungenerous, so bad, a man.

You bid me not be concerned at the bickerings between your mamma and you. Can I avoid concern, when those bickerings are on my account?—That they are raised by my uncle, and my other relations, surely must add to my concern.

But I must observe, perhaps too critically for the state my mind is in at present, that the very sentences you give from your mamma, as so many imperatives, which you take amiss, are very severe reflections upon yourself.—For instance—*You shall, I tell you, Nancy*, implies, that you had disputed her will.—And so of the rest.

And further let me observe, with respect to what you say, that there cannot be the same reason for a prohibition of correspondence with me, as there was of mine with Mr. Lovelace; that I thought as little of bad consequences from him at the time, as you can do from me: But if obedience be a duty, the breach of it is the fault, however circumstances may differ. Surely there is no merit in setting up our own judgments against the judgments of our parents. And if it be punishable so to do, I have been severely punished:

and

(a) See Vol. I. p. 27.

and that is what I warn'd you of, from my own example.

Yet, God forgive me ! I advise thus against myself with very great reluctance : And to say truth, have not strength of mind, at present, to decline it myself.—But, if the occasion go not off, I will take it into farther consideration.

You give me very good advice in relation to this man ; and I thank you for it.—When you bid me be more upon the *reserve* with him, perhaps I may try for it : But to *palliate*, as you call it, that cannot be done, by, my dearest Miss Howe,

Your own

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R XX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

YOU may believe, my dear Miss Howe, that the circumstances of the noise and outcry within the garden door, on Monday last, gave me no small uneasiness to think that I was in the hands of a man, who could, by such vile premeditation, lay a snare to trick me out of myself, as I have so frequently called it.

Whenever he came in my sight, the thought of this gave me an indignation that made his presence disgustful to me ; and the more, as I fancy'd I beheld in his face a triumph which reproached my weakness on that account ; altho', perhaps, it was only the same vivacity and placidness that generally sit upon his features.

I was resolved to task him upon this subject, the first time I could have patience to enter upon it with him. For, besides that it piqued me excessively from the nature of the artifice, I expected shuffling and evasion, if he were guilty, that would have incensed me :
And,

And, if not confessedly guilty, such unsatisfactory declarations, as still would have kept my mind doubtful and uneasy; and would upon every new offence that he might give me, sharpen my disgusts to him.

I have had the opportunity I waited for; and will lay before you the result.

He was making his court to my good opinion in very polite terms, and with great seriousness lamenting that he had lost it; declaring, that he knew not how he had deserved to do so; attributing to me a prejudice, at least an indifference to him, that seemed, to his infinite concern, hourly to increase. And he besought me to let him know my whole mind, that he might have an opportunity either to confess his faults, and amend them, or to clear his conduct to my satisfaction, and thereby intitle himself to a greater share of my confidence.

I answer'd him with quickness—Then, Mr. Lovelace, I will tell you one thing with a frankness, that is, perhaps, more suitable to *my* character, than to *yours* [He hoped not, he said], which gives me a very bad opinion of you, as a designing, artful man.

I am all attention, Madam.

I never can think tolerably of you, while the noise and voice I heard at the garden-door, which put me into the terror you took so much advantage of, remains unaccounted for. Tell me fairly, tell me candidly, the whole of that circumstance; and of your dealings with that wicked Joseph Leman; and, according to your explicitness in this particular, I shall form a judgment of your professions.

I will, without reserve, my dearest life, said he, tell you the whole; and hope that my sincerity in the relation will atone for any thing you may think wrong in the fact.

‘ I knew nothing, *said he*, of this man, this Leman, and should have scorned a resort to so low a method, as bribing the servant of any family, to
‘ let

‘ let me into the secrets of that family, if I had not
‘ detected him attempting to corrupt a servant of
‘ mine, to inform him of all my motions, of all my
‘ supposed intrigues, and, in short, of every action
‘ of my private life, as well as of my circumstances
‘ and engagements; and this for motives too obvi-
‘ ous to be dwelt upon.

‘ My servant told me of his offers, and I ordered
‘ him, unknown to the fellow, to let me hear a con-
‘ versation that was to pass between them.

‘ In the midst of it, and just as he had made an
‘ offer of money for a particular piece of intelligence,
‘ promising more when procured, I broke in upon
‘ them, and by bluster, calling for a knife to cut off
‘ his ears (one of which I took hold of), in order to
‘ make a present of it, as I said, to his employers,
‘ I obliged him to tell me who they were.

‘ Your brother, Madam, and your uncle Antony,
‘ he nam’d.

‘ It was not difficult, when I had given him my
‘ pardon on naming them, after I had set before him
‘ the enormity of the task he had undertaken, and
‘ the honourableness of my intentions to your dear
‘ self, to prevail upon him, by a larger reward, to
‘ serve me; since, at the same time, he might keep
‘ your uncle and brother’s favour; as I desired to
‘ know nothing, but what related to myself and to
‘ you, in order to guard us both against the effects of
‘ an ill-will, which he acknowledged all his fellow-
‘ servants, as well as himself, thought undeserved.

‘ By this means, I own to you, Madam, I fre-
‘ quently turned his principles about upon a pivot of
‘ my own, unknown to themselves: And the fel-
‘ low, who is always calling himself a *plain man*, and
‘ boasting of his CONSCIENCE, was the easier, as I
‘ condescended frequently to assure him of my ho-
‘ nourable views; and as he knew, that the use I
VOL. III. M ‘ made

‘ made of his intelligence prevented, perhaps, fatal mischiefs.

‘ I was the more pleased with his services, as, let me acknowledge to you, Madam, they procured to you, unknown to yourself, a safe and uninterrupted egress (which perhaps would not otherwise have been continued to you, so long as it was) to the garden and wood-house : For he undertook to them, to watch all your motions : And the more chearfully (for the fellow loves you), as it kept off the curiosity of others (a).’

So, my dear, it comes out, that I *myself* was obliged to this deep contriver.

I sat in silent astonishment ; and thus he went on.

‘ As to the circumstances, which you, Madam, think so hardly of me for, I do freely confess, that having a suspicion that you would revoke your intention of getting away, and in that case, as I was determin’d, if possible, to prevail upon you to adhere to your resolution, apprehending that we should not have the time together, that was necessary for that purpose ; I had ordered him to keep off every body he *could* keep off, and to be himself within view of the garden-door.’——

But pray, Sir, interrupting him, how came you to apprehend that I should revoke my intention ? I had indeed deposited a letter to that purpose ; but you had it not : And how, as I had reserved to myself the privilege of a revocation, did you know, but I might have prevailed upon my friends, and so have revoked upon good grounds ?

‘ I will be very ingenuous, Madam : You had made me hope, that, if you changed your mind, you would give me a meeting, to apprize me of the reasons for it : I went to the loose bricks, and I saw the letter there : And as I knew your friends were im-

‘ moveably

(a) See Vol. I. p. 233, 234.

‘ moveably fixed in their schemes, I doubted not but
‘ the letter was to revoke or suspend your resolution;
‘ and probably to serve instead of a meeting too. I
‘ therefore let it lie, that, if you did revoke, you
‘ might be under the necessity of meeting me for the
‘ sake of the expectation you had given me: And as
‘ I came prepared, I was resolved, pardon me, Ma-
‘ dam, whatever were your intentions, that you
‘ should not go back. Had I taken your letter, I
‘ must have been determined by the contents of it,
‘ for the present, at least: But not having receiv’d it,
‘ and you having reason to think I wanted not reso-
‘ lution, in a situation so desperate, to make your
‘ friends a personal visit, I depended upon the inter-
‘ view you had bid me hope for.’

Wicked wretch! said I; It is my grief, that I gave you opportunity to take so exact a measure of my weakness!—But *would* you have presumed to visit the family, had I not met you?

Indeed I would. I had some friends in readiness, who were to have accompany’d me to them. And had they refused to see me, or to give me audience, I would have taken my friends with me to Solmes.

And what did you intend to do to Mr. Solmes?

Not the least hurt, had the man been passive.

But had he *not* been passive, as you call it, what would you have done to Mr. Solmes?

He was loth, he said, to tell me—Yet not the least hurt to his *person*,

I repeated my question.

If he must tell me, he only proposed to carry off the *poor fellow*, and to hide him for a month or two. And this he would have done, let what would have been the consequence.

Was ever such a wretch heard of!—I sigh’d from the bottom of my heart.—But bid him proceed from the part I had interrupted him at.

‘ I order’d the fellow, as I told you, Madam, said he, to keep within view of the garden-door : And if he found any parley between us, and any-body coming (before you could retreat undiscovered) whose coming might be attended with violent effects, he would cry out ; and this not only in order to save himself from their suspicions of him, but to give me warning to make off, and, if possible, to induce you [I own it, Madam] to go off with me, according to your own appointment. And I hope, all circumstances consider’d, and the danger I was in of losing you for ever, that the acknowledgment of *this* contrivance, or if you had *not* met me, *that* upon Solmes, will not procure me your hatred : For, had they come, as *I* expected, as well as *you*, what a despicable wretch had I been, could I have left you to the insults of a brother, and others of your family, whose mercy was cruelty, when they had *not* the pretence which this detected interview would have furnished them with !’

What a wretch, said I !——But if, Sir, taking your *own* account of this strange matter to be fact, any-body were coming, how happen’d it, that I saw only that man Leman (for I *thought* it was he) out of the door, and at a distance, look after us ?

Very lucky ! said he, putting his hand first in one pocket, then in another. I hope I have not thrown it away——It is, perhaps, in the coat I had on yesterday——Little did I think it would be necessary to be produced——But I love to come to a demonstration whenever I can——I *may* be giddy——I *may* be heedless. I *am* indeed——But no man, as to *you*, Madam, ever had a sincerer heart.

He then stepping to the parlour-door, called his servant to bring him the coat he had on yesterday.

The servant did. And in the pocket, rumpled up as a paper he regarded not, he pulled out a letter, written

written by that Joseph, dated Monday night; in which 'he begs pardon for crying out so soon:' Says, 'That his fears of being discovered to act on 'both sides, had made him take the rushing of a little dog (that always follows him) thro' the phyl-lirea-hedge, for Betty's being at hand, or some of 'his masters: And that, when he found his mistake, 'he opened the door by his own key [Which the 'contriving wretch confessed he had furnished him 'with] and inconsiderately ran out in a hurry, to have 'apprised him, that his crying-out was owing to his 'fright only:' And he added, 'that they were upon 'the hunt for me, by the time he returned (a).'

I shook my head—Deep! deep! deep! said I, at the best!—O Mr. Lovelace! God forgive and reform you!—But you are, I see plainly, upon the whole of your own account, a very artful, a very designing man.

Love, my dearest life, is ingenious. Night and day have I racked my stupid brains [O Sir, thought I, not stupid! 'Twere well, perhaps, if they were] to contrive methods to prevent the sacrifice designed to be made of you, and the mischief that must have ensued upon it: So little hold in your affections: Such undeserved antipathy from your friends: So much danger of losing you for ever from *both* causes—I have not had, for the whole fortnight before last Monday, half an hour's rest at a time. And I own to you, Madam, that I should never have forgiven myself, had I omitted any contrivance or forethought, that would have prevented your return without me.

Again I blamed myself for meeting him: And justly; for there were many chances to one, that I had *not* met him. And if I had not, all his fortnight's

M 3

con-

(a) See his Letter to Joseph Leman, No. ii. of this volume, p. 26, where he tells him, he would contrive for him a letter of this nature to copy.

contrivances, as to me, would have come to nothing; and, perhaps, I might nevertheless have escaped Solmes.

Yet, had he resolved to come to Harlowe-Place with his friends, and been insulted, as he certainly would have been, what mischiefs might have followed!

But his resolution to run away with, and to hide the poor Solmes for a month or so, O my dear! what a wretch have I let run away with *me*, instead of *him*!

I asked him, If he thought such enormities as these, such defiance of the laws of society, would have passed unpunished?

He had the assurance to say, with one of his usual gay airs, That he should by this means have disappointed his enemies, and saved me from a forced marriage. He had no pleasure in such desperate pushes. Solmes he would not have *personally* hurt. He must have fled his country for a time at least: And, truly, if he had been obliged to do so, as all his hopes of my favour must have been at an end, he would have had a fellow-traveller of his own sex out of our family, whom I little thought of.

Was ever such a wretch!—To be sure he meant my brother!

And such, Sir, said I, in high resentment, are the uses you make of your corrupt intelligencer——

My corrupt intelligencer, Madam, interrupted he! He is to this hour your brother's as well as mine. By what I have ingenuously told you, you may see, who began this corruption. Let me assure you, Madam, that there are many free things, which I have been guilty of, as *reprizals*, which I would not have been the *aggressor* in.

All that I shall further say on this head, Mr. Lovelace, is this: That as this vile double-faced wretch has probably been the cause of great mischief on both sides, and still continues, as you own, his wicked practices, it is but my duty to have my friends apprized,

prized, what a creature he is, whom some of them encourage.

What you please, Madam, as to that—My service and your brother's are now almost over for him. The fellow has made a good hand of it. He does not intend to stay long in his place. He is now actually in treaty for an inn, which will do his business for life. I can tell you further, that he makes love to your sister's Betty: And this by my advice. They will be marry'd, when he is established. An innkeeper's wife is every man's mistress; and I have a scheme in my head, to set some engines at work, to make her repent her saucy behaviour to you to the last day of her life.

What a wicked schemer are you, Sir!—Who shall avenge upon you the still greater evils which *you* have been guilty of?—I forgive Betty with all my heart. She was not my servant; and but too probably, in what she did, obey'd the commands of her, to whom she owed duty, better than I obey'd those, to whom I owed more.

No matter for that, the wretch said [To be sure, my dear, he must design to make me afraid of him] The decree was gone out—Betty must smart—Smart too by an act of her own choice. He lov'd, he said, to make bad people their own punishers.—Nay, Madam, excuse me; but if the fellow, if this Joseph, in your opinion, deserves punishment, mine is a complicated scheme; a man and his wife cannot well suffer separately, and it may come home to *him* too——

I had no patience with him. I told him so.—But, Sir, said I, I see what a man I am with. Your *rattle* warns me of the *snake*. And away I flung; leaving him seemingly vex'd, and in confusion.

L E T-

LETTER XXI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

MY plain dealing with him, on seeing him again, and the free dislike I expressed to his ways, his manners, and his contrivances, as well as to his speeches, have obliged him to recollect himself a little. He will have it, that the menaces which he threw out just now against my brother and Mr. Solmes, are only the effect of an unmeaning pleasantry. He has too great a stake in his country, he says, to be guilty of such enterprizes, as should lay him under a necessity of quitting it for ever. Twenty things, particularly, he says, he has suffer'd Joseph Leeman to tell of him, that were not and could not be true, in order to make himself formidable in some peoples eyes, and this purely with a view to prevent mischief. He is unhappy, as far as he knows, in a quick invention, in hitting readily upon expedients; and many things are reported of him which he never said, and many which he never did, and others which he has only talked of (as just now) and which he has forgot as soon as the words have pass'd his lips.

This may be so, in part, my dear. No one man so young could be so wicked as he has been reported to be. But such a man at the head of such wretches as he is said to have at his beck, all men of fortune and fearlessness, and capable of such enterprizes as I have unhappily found him capable of, what is not to be apprehended from him!

His carelessness about his character is one of his excuses: A very bad one. What hope can a woman have of a man, who values not his reputation? — These gay wretches may, in mix'd conversation, divert for an hour, or so:—But the man of probity, the man of virtue, is the man that is to be the partner for life. What woman, who could help it, would submit

submit it to the courtesy of a wretch, who avows a disregard to all moral sanctions, whether he will perform his part of the matrimonial obligation, and treat her with tolerable politeness?

With these notions, and with these reflections, to be thrown upon such a man myself—Would to Heaven—But what avail wishes now?—To whom can I fly, if I would fly from him?

L E T T E R XXII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Friday, April 14.

NEVER did I hear of such a parcel of foolish toads as these Harlowes!—Why, Belford, the Lady must fall, if every hair of her head were a guardian angel, unless they were to make a visible appearance for her, or, snatching her from me at unawares would draw her after them into the starry regions.

All I had to apprehend, was, that a daughter so reluctantly carried off, would offer terms to her father, and would be accepted upon a mutual *concedence*; *They* to give up *Solmes*; *She* to give up *me*: And so I was contriving to do all I could to guard against the latter. But they seem resolved to perfect the work they have begun.

What stupid creatures there are in the world! Cunning whelp the brother! not to know, that he who would be bribed to undertake a base thing by one, would be *over-bribed* to *retort* the baseness:—Especially when he could be put into the way to serve himself by both!—Thou, Jack, wilt never know one half of my contrivances.

He here relates the conversation between him and the Lady, (upon the subject of the noise and exclamations his agent made at the garden-door) to the same effect as in Letter xx. and proceeds exulting:

What

What a capacity for glorious mischief has thy friend!—Yet how near the truth all of it! The only deviation, my asserting, that the fellow made the noises by mistake, and thro' fright, and not by previous direction: Had she known the precise truth, her pride (to be so taken in) would never have let her forgive me.

Had I been a hero, I should have made gunpowder useless; for I should have blown up all my adversaries by dint of stratagem, turning their own devices upon them.

But these fathers and mothers—Lord help 'em!—Were not the powers of nature stronger than those of discretion, and were not that busy *Dea Bona* to afford her genial aids, till tardy prudence qualified parents to *manage* their future offspring, how few people would have children!

James and Arabella may have *their* motives; but what can be said of a father acting as *this* father has acted? What for a mother? What for an aunt? What for uncles—Who can have patience with such fellows and fellow-esses?

Soon will the fair-one hear how high their foolish resentments run again her: And then she'll have a little more confidence in me, I hope. Then will I be jealous that she loves me not with that preference my heart builds upon: Then will I bring her to confessions of grateful love: And then will I kiss her when I please; and not stand trembling, as now, like an hungry hound, who sees a delicious morsel within his reach (the froth hanging about his vermillion jaws) yet dare not leap at it for his life.

But I was *originally* a bashful whelp—Bashful still, with regard to this Lady!—Bashful, yet know the sex so well!—But that indeed is the reason that I know it so well:—For, Jack, I have had abundant cause, when I have looked into *myself*, by way of comparison with the *other* sex, to conclude, that a
bashful

bashful man has a good deal of the soul of a woman ; and so, like Tiresias, can tell what they think, and what they drive at, as well as themselves.

The modest ones and I, particularly, are pretty much upon a par. The difference between us is only, What *They think*, I *act*. But the immodest ones out-do the worst of us by a bar's length, both in thinking and acting

One argument let me plead in proof of my assertion ; That even we rakes love modesty in a woman ; while the modest women, as they are accounted, that is to say, the flyest, love, and generally prefer, an impudent man. Whence can this be, but from a likeness in nature ? And this made the poet say, That every woman is a rake in her heart. It concerns them, by their *actions*, to prove the contrary, if they can.

Thus have I read in some of the philosophers, *That no wickedness is comparable to the wickedness of a woman* (a). Canst thou tell me, Jack, who says this ? Was it Socrates ? for he had the devil of a wife ?—Or who ? Or is it Solomon ?—*King Solomon*—Thou rememberest to have read of such a king, dost thou not ? SOLOMON, I learned, when an infant [My mother was a woman] to answer, when asked, *Who was the wisest man ?*—But my indulgent questioner never asked me, How he came by the un-inspired part of his wisdom.

Come, come, Jack, you and I are not so very bad, could we but stop where we are.

He then gives the particulars of what passed between him and the Lady on his menaces relating to her brother and Mr. Solmes, and of his design to punish Betty Barnes and Joseph Leman.

LET-

(a) Mr. Lovelace is as much out in his conjectures of Solomon, as of Socrates. The passage is in Ecclesiasticus, chap. xxv.

LETTER XXIII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.**Friday, April 14.*

I Will now give you the particulars of a conversation that has just passed between Mr. Lovelace and me; which I must call agreeable.

It began with his telling me, that he had just received intelligence, that my friends were of a sudden come to a resolution, to lay aside all thoughts of pursuing me, or of getting me back: And that therefore, he attended me, to know my pleasure; and what *I* would do, or have *him* do?

I told him, that I would have him leave me directly; and that, when it was known to every-body, that I was absolutely independent of him, it would pass that I had left my father's house, because of my brother's ill-usage of me: Which was a plea that I might make with justice, and to the excuse of my father, as well as of myself.

He mildly reply'd, that if he could be certain, that my relations would *adhere* to this their new resolution, he could have no objection, since such was my pleasure: But that, as he was well assured, that they had taken it only from apprehensions, that a more *active* one might involve my brother (who had breath'd nothing but revenge) in some fatal misfortune, there was too much reason to believe, that they would resume their former purpose, the moment they should think they *safely* might.

This, Madam, said he, is a risque I cannot run. You would think it strange, if I could. And yet, as soon as I knew they had so given out, I thought it proper to apprize you of it, and to take your commands upon it.

Let me hear, said I, willing to try if he had any particular view, what *you* think most adviseable?

'Tis

'Tis very easy to say That, if I durst—If I might not offend you—If it were not to break conditions that shall be inviolable with me.

Say then, Sir, what you *would* say. I can approve or disapprove, as I think fit.

To wave, Madam, what I *would* say till I have more courage to speak out [More courage—Mr. Lovelace more courage, my dear!]
—I will only propose what I think will be most agreeable to *you*.—Suppose, if you choose not to go to Lady Betty's, that you take a turn cross the country to Windsor?

Why to Windsor?

Because it is a pleasant place: Because it lies in the way either to Berkshire, to Oxford, or to London—*Berkshire*, where Lord M. is at present: *Oxford*, in the neighbourhood of which lives Lady Betty: *London*, whether you may retire at your pleasure: Or, if you will *have* it so, whether I may go, you staying at Windsor; and yet be within an easy distance of you, if any thing should happen, or if your friends should change their pacific resolution.

This displeased me not. But I said, My only objection was, the distance from Miss Howe, of whom I would be glad to be always within two or three hours reach by a messenger, if possible

If I had thoughts of any other place than Windsor, or nearer to Miss Howe, he wanted but my commands, and would seek for proper accommodations: But, fix as I pleased, farther or nearer, he had servants, and they had nothing else to do, but to obey me.

A grateful thing then he named to me---To send for my Hannah, as soon as I should be fixed; unless I would choose one of the young gentlewomen *here* to attend me, both of whom, as I had acknowledged, were very obliging; and he knew I had generosity enough to make it worth either of their whiles.

This of Hannah, he might see, I took very well. I said, I had thoughts of sending for her, as soon as I got to more convenient lodgings. As to these young gentlewomen, it were pity to break in upon that usefulness which the whole family were of to each other: Each having her proper part, and performing it with an agreeable alacrity: Insomuch that I liked them all so well, that I could even pass my days among them, were he to leave me; by which means the lodgings would be more convenient to me than they were.

He need not repeat his objections to this place, he said. But as to going to Windsor, or where-ever else I thought fit, or as to *his* personal attendance, or leaving me, he would assure me (he very agreeably said), that I could propose nothing in which I thought my reputation, and even my *punctilio*, concerned, that he would not chearfully come into. And since I was so much taken up with my pen, he would instantly order his horse to be got ready, and would set out.

Not to be off my caution, Have you any acquaintance at Windsor? said I.---Know you of any convenient lodgings there.

Except with the forest, reply'd he, where I have often hunted, I know the least of Windsor, of any place so noted, and so pleasant. Indeed, I have not a single acquaintance there.

Upon the whole, I told him, that I thought his proposal of Windsor not amiss; and that I would remove thither, if I could get a lodging only for myself, and an upper-chamber for Hannah; for that my stock of money was but small, as was easy to be conceived; and I should be very loth to be obliged to any-body. I added, that the sooner I removed the better; for that then he could have no objection to go to London, or Berkshire, as he pleased: And I should let every body know my independence.

He

He again propos'd himself, in very polite terms, for my banker. But I, as civilly, declined his offers.

This conversation was to be, all of it, in the main, agreeable. He asked, whether I would choose to lodge in the town of Windsor, or out of it?

As near the castle, I said, as possible, for the convenience of going constantly to the public worship: An opportunity I had been too long deprived of.

He should be very glad, he told me, if he could procure me accommodations in any one of the canons houses; which he imagin'd would be more agreeable to me than any other, on many accounts. And as he could depend upon my promise, Never to have any other man but himself, on the condition he had so cheerfully subscribed to, he should be easy; since it was now his part, *in earnest*, to set about recommending himself to my favour, by the *only* way he knew it could be done. Adding, with a very serious air---I am but a young man, Madam; but I have run a long course: Let not your purity of mind incline you to despise me for the acknowledgement. It is high time to be weary of it, and to reform: since, like Solomon, I can say, There is nothing New under the sun. But that is my belief, that a life of virtue can afford such pleasures, on reflection, as will be for ever-blooming, for ever New!

I was agreeably surprized. I looked at him, I believe, as if I doubted my ears and my eyes!--His features and aspect, however, became his words.

I express'd my satisfaction in terms so agreeable to him, that he said, He found a delight in this early dawning of a better day to him, and in *my* approbation, which he had never received from the success of the most favour'd of his pursuits.

Surely, my dear, the man *must* be in earnest. He could not have said this; he could not have *thought* it, had he not. What followed made me still readier to believe him.

In the midst of my wild vagaries, said he, I have ever preserved a reverence for religion, and for religious men. I always called another cause, when any of my libertine companions, in pursuance of Lord Shaftesbury's test (which is a part of the rakes creed, and what I may call *The whetstone of infidelity*), endeavour'd to turn the sacred subject into ridicule. On this very account I have been called, by good men of the clergy, who nevertheless would have it, that I was a *practical rake*, *The decent rake*: And indeed I had too much pride in my shame, to disown the name.

This, Madam, I am the readier to confess, as it may give you hope, that the generous task of my reformation, which I flatter myself you will have the goodness to undertake, will not be so difficult a one as you may have imagin'd; for it has afforded me some pleasure in my retired hours, when a temporary remorse has struck me for any thing I have done amiss, that I should *one day* take delight in another course of life: For, without one *can*, I dare say, no durable *good* is to be expected from the endeavour.—Your example, Madam, must do all, must confirm all (a).

The divine grace, or favour, Mr. Lovelace, must do All, and confirm All. You know not how much you please me, that I can talk to you in this dialect.

And I then thought of his generosity to his pretty rustic; and of his kindness to his tenants.

Yet, Madam, be pleased to remember one thing: Reformation cannot be a *sudden* work. I have infinite vivacity: It is that which runs away with me. Judge, dearest madam, by what I am going to confess, that I have a prodigious way to journey on, before a good person will think me tolerable; since, tho' I have read in some of our *Perfectionists* enough to make a *better* man than myself, either run into
mad-

(a) *That he proposes one day to reform, and that he has sometimes good motions, see Vol. I. p. 232.*

madness or despair, about the grace you mention; yet I cannot enter into the meaning of the word, nor into the modus of its operation. Let me not then be checked, when I mention *your* example for my *visible* reliance; and instead of using such words, till I can better understand them, suppose all the rest included in the profession of *that* reliance.

I told him, that, altho' I was somewhat concern'd at his expression, and surpris'd at so much *darkness*, as, for want of another word, I would call it, in a man of his talents and learning; yet I was pleas'd with his ingenuity. I wish'd him to encourage this way of thinking. I told him, that his observation, that no *durable* good was to be expected from any new course, where there was not a *delight* taken in it, was just: But that the delight would follow by use.

And twenty things of this sort I even *preach'd* to him; taking care, however, not to be tedious, nor to let my expanded heart give him a contracted or impatient brow. And, indeed, he took visible pleasure in what I said, and even hung upon the subject, when I, to try him, seem'd to be ready to drop it, once or twice: And proceeded to give me a most agreeable instance, that he could, at times, think both deeply and seriously. — Thus it was.

He was wounded dangerously, once, in a duel, he said, in the left arm, baring it, to shew me the scar: That this (notwithstanding a great effusion of blood, it being upon an artery) was follow'd by a violent fever, which at last fixed upon his spirits; and *that* so obstinately, that neither did *he* desire life, nor his *friends* expect it: That, for a month together, his heart as he thought, was so totally changed, that he despised his former courses, and particularly that rashness, which had brought him to the state he was in, and his antagonist (who, however, was the aggressor) into a much worse: That, in this space, he had thoughts, which, at times, gives him pleasure to re-

flect upon: And although these promising prospects changed, as he recovered health and spirits; yet he parted with them, with so much reluctance, that he could not help shewing it, in a copy of verses, *truly blank* ones, he said; some of which he repeated, and (advantaged by the grace which he gives to every thing he repeats) I thought them very tolerable ones; the sentiments, however, much graver than I expected from him.

He has promised me a copy of the lines: and then I shall judge better of their merit; and so shall you. The tendency of them was, “That, since sickness
“only gave him a proper train of thinking, and that
“his restored health brought with it a return of his
“evil habits, he was ready to renounce the gifts of
“nature for those of contemplation.”

He farther declared, that altho’ all these good motions went off (as he had own’d) on his recovery, yet he had better hopes now, from the influence of my example, and from the reward before him, if he persevered: And that he was the more hopeful that he should, as his present resolution was made in a full tide of health and spirits; and when he had nothing to wish for, but perseverance, to intitle himself to my favour.

I will not throw cold water, Mr. Lovelace, said I, on a rising flame: But look to it! For I shall endeavour to keep you up to this spirit. I shall measure your value of me by this test: And I would have you bear those charming lines of Mr. Rowe for ever in your mind; you, who have, by your own confession, so much to repent of; and as the scar, indeed, you shew’d me, will, in one instance, remind you to your dying day.

The lines, my dear, are from that poet’s Ulysses. You have heard me often admire them; and I repeated them to him:

Habitual

Habitual evils change not on a sudden;
 But many days must pass, and many sorrows;
 Conscious remorse and anguish must be felt,
 To curb desire, to break the stubborn will,
 And work a second nature in the soul,
 Ere virtue can resume the place she lost:
 'Tis else DISSIMULATION—

He had often read these lines, he said; but never *tasted* them before.—By his *soul* (the unmortified creature swore) and as *he hoped to be saved*, he was *now* in earnest, in his good resolutions. He had said, *before* I repeated these lines from Rowe, that habitual evils could not be changed on a *sudden*: But he hoped, he should not be thought a *dissembler*, if he were not enabled to *hold* his good purposes; since ingratitude and dissimulation were vices that of all others he abhorred.

May you ever abhor them! said I. They are the most odious of all vices.

I hope, my dear Miss Howe, I shall not have occasion, in my future letters, to contradict these promising appearances. Should I have *nothing* on his side to combat with, I shall be very far from being happy, from the sense of my fault, and the indignation of all my relations. So shall not fail of condign punishment for it, from my inward remorse, on account of my forfeited character. But the least ray of hope could not dart in upon me, without my being willing to lay hold of the very first opportunity to communicate it to *you*, who take so generous a share in all my concerns.

Nevertheless, you may depend upon it, my dear, that these agreeable assurances, and hopes of his begun reformation, shall not make me forget my caution. Not that I think, at worst, any more than you, that he dare to harbour a thought injurious to my honour: But he is very various, and there is an *apparent*,
 and

and even an *acknowledg'd* unfixedness in his temper, which, at times, gives me some uneasiness. I am resolved therefore to keep him at a distance from my person and my thoughts, as much as I can: For whether *all* men are, or are not, incroachers, I am sure Mr. Lovelace is one.

Hence it is, that I have always cast about, and will continue to cast about, what ends he may have in view from *this* proposal, or from *that* report: In a word, tho' hopeful of the *best*, I will always be fearful of the *worst*, in every thing that admits of doubt. For it is better, in such a situation as mine, to apprehend without cause, than to subject myself to surprise for want of forethought.

Mr. Lovelace is gone to Windsor, having left two servants to attend me. He purposes to be back to-morrow.

I have written to my aunt Hervey, to supplicate her interest in my behalf, for my cloaths, books, and money; signifying to her, "That, could I be restored to the favour of my family, and be allowed a negative only, as to any man who might be proposed to me, and be used like a daughter, a niece, and a sister, I would still stand by my offer to live single, and submit, as I ought, to a negative, from my father." Intimating nevertheless, "That it were perhaps better, after the usage I have received from my brother and sister, that I might be allowed to be distant from them, as well for their sakes as my own," [meaning, as I suppose it will be taken, at my Dairy-house]—offering "to take my father's directions, as to the manner I should live in, the servants I should have, and in every thing that should shew the dutiful subordination that I was willing to conform to."

My aunt will know by my letter to my sister how to direct to me, if she be permitted to favour me with a line.

I am

I am equally earnest with *her* in *this* letter, as I was with my *sister* in *That* I wrote to *her*, to obtain for me a speedy reconciliation, that I may not be further precipitated; intimating, "That, by a timely lenity, all may pass for a misunderstanding only, which, otherwise, will be thought equally disgraceful to them, and to me; appealing to her for the necessity I was under to do what I did."

Here I close for the present, with the assurance that I am

Your ever obliged and affectionate

CLARISSA HARLOWE.

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Friday, April 14.

THOU hast often reproached me, Jack, with my vanity, without distinguishing the humorous turn that accompanied it; and for which, at the same time that thou robbest me of the merit of it, thou admirest me highly. *Envy* gives thee the *indistinction*: *Nature* inspires the *admiration*: Unknown to thyself it inspires it. But thou art too clumsy and too short-sighted a mortal, to know how to account even for the impulses by which thou thyself art moved.

Well, but this acquits thee not of my charge of vanity, Lovelace, methinks thou sayest:

And true thou sayest: For I have indeed a confounded parcel of it. But, if men of parts may not be allowed to be vain, who should? And yet, upon second thoughts, men of parts have the least occasion of any to be vain; since the world [so few of *them* are there in it] are ready to find them out, and extol them. If a fool can be made sensible, that there is a man who has more understanding than *himself*, he is ready enough to conclude, that such a man must be a very extraordinary creature.

And

And what, at this rate, is the general conclusion to be drawn from the premises?—Is it not, That *no* man ought to be vain? But what if a man can't help it?—This, perhaps, may be *my* case. But there is nothing on which I value myself so much as upon my *inventions*. And, for the soul of me, I cannot help letting it be seen, that I *do*. Yet this vanity may be a means, perhaps, to overthrow me with this sagacious lady.

She is very apprehensive of me, I see. I have studied before her and Miss Howe, as often as I have been with them, to pass for a giddy thoughtless fellow. What a folly then to be so *expatiatingly* sincere, in my answer to her home Put, upon the noises within the garden?—But such success having attended that contrivance [Success, Jack, has blown many a man up!], my cursed vanity got uppermost, and kept down my caution. The menace to have secreted Solmes, and that other, that I had thoughts to run away with her foolish brother, and of my project to revenge her upon the two servants, so much terrified my beloved, that I was forced to sit down to muse how to retrieve myself with her.

Some favourable incidents, at the time, tumbled in from my agent in her family; at least such as I was determined to *make* favourable: And therefore I desired admittance; and this before she could resolve any thing against me; that is to say, while her admiration of my intrepidity kept resolution in suspense.

Accordingly, I prepared myself to be all gentleness, all obligingness, all serenity; and as I have now-and-then, and always *had*, more or less, good motions pop in my mind, I encouraged and collected every thing of this sort that I had ever had from novicehood to maturity, [not long in recollecting, Jack!] in order to bring the dear creature into good humour with me: And who knows, thought I, if I can hold it, and proceed, but I may be able to lay a foundation

fit

fit to build my grand scheme upon?—*Love*, thought I, is not *naturally* a doubter : *Fear* is : I will try to banish the latter : Nothing then but Love will remain. *Credulity* is the God of Love's prime minister ; and they never are asunder.

He then acquaints his friend with what passed between him and the Lady, in relation to his advices from Harlowe-Place, and to his proposal about lodgings, pretty much to the same purpose as in hers preceding.

When he comes to mention his proposal of the Windsor lodgings, thus he expresses himself.

Now, Belford, can it enter into thy leaden head, what I meant by this proposal?—I know it cannot. And so I'll tell thee.

To leave her for a day or two, with a view to serve her by my absence, would, as I thought, look like confiding in her favour.—I could not think of leaving her, thou knowest, while I had reason to believe her friends would pursue us ; and I began to apprehend, that she would suspect, that I made a pretence of that intentional pursuit, to keep about her, and with her. But now that they had declared against it, and that they would not receive her, if she came back again [a declaration she had better hear first from me, than from Miss Howe, or any other] ; what should hinder me from giving her this mark of my obedience ; especially as I could leave Will, who is a clever fellow, and can do any thing but write and spell, and my uncle's Jonas [not as guards, to be sure, but as attendants only] ; the latter to be dispatch'd to me occasionally by the former, whom I could acquaint with my motions ?

Then I wanted to inform myself, why I had not congratulatory letters from my aunts, and from my cousins Montague, to whom I had written, glorying in my beloved's escape ; which letters, as they should
be

be worded, might possibly be made necessary to shew, as matters proceed.

As to Windsor, I had no design to carry her particularly thither : But somewhere it was proper to name, as she condescended to ask my advice about it. London, I durst not ; but very cautiously ; and so as to make it her own option : For I must tell thee, that there is such a perverseness in the sex, that, when they ask your advice, they do it only to know your opinion, that they may oppose it ; tho', had not the thing in question been *your* choice, perhaps it had been *theirs*.

I could easily give reasons *against* Windsor, after I had pretended to be there ; and this would have looked the better, as it was a place of my own nomination ; and shewn her, that I had no fixed scheme.—Never was there in woman such a sagacious, such an all-alive apprehension, as in this.—Yet it is a grievous thing to an honest man to be suspected.

Then, in my going or return, I can call upon Mrs. Greme. She and my beloved had a great deal of talk together. If I knew what it was about ; and that *Either*, upon their first acquaintance, was for benefiting herself by the *Other*, I might contrive to serve them *both*, without hurting *myself* : For these are the most prudent ways of doing friendships, and what are not followed by regrets, tho' the *serv-ed* should prove ingrateful. Then Mrs. Greme corresponds by pen and ink with her former sister, where we are : Something may possibly arise *that way*, either of a convenient nature, which I may pursue ; or an inconvenient, which I may avoid.

Always be careful of back-doors, is a maxim with me in all my exploits. Whoever knows me, knows that I am no proud man. I can talk as familiarly to servants as to principals, when I have a mind to make it worth their while to oblige me in any thing—Then servants are but as the common soldiers in an army :

They

The
and
I
has
ject
out-
ceit
thee
skim
phra
my
P
has
God
nec
that
with
shou
disap
B
quan

B
have
her t
real
haug
near
othe
her a
N
sense
alwa
V

They do all the mischief; frequently without malice, and merely, good souls! for mischief-sake.

I am most apprehensive about Miss Howe. She has a confounded deal of wit, and wants only a subject, to shew as much roguery: And should I be out-witted, with all my sententious, boasting conceit of my own *nostrum-mongership*—[I love to plague thee, who art a pretender to accuracy, and a *surface-skimmer* in learning, with out-of-the-way words and phrases] I shall certainly hang, drown, or shoot myself.

Poor Hickman!—I pity him for the prospect he has with such a virago!—— But the fellow's a fool, God wot! And now I think of it, it is absolutely necessary for complete happiness in the marry'd state, that one *should* be a fool; an argument I once held with this very Miss Howe.—— But then the fool should *know* that he is so, else the obstinate one will disappoint the wise one.

* But my agent Joseph has help'd me to secure this quarter.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. LOVELACE; In Continuation.

BUT is it not a confounded thing, that I cannot fasten an obligation upon this proud beauty? I have two motives in endeavouring to prevail upon her to accept money and raiment from me: One, the real pleasure I should have in the accommodating the haughty maid; and to think there was something near her, and upon her, that I could call *mine*: The other, in order to abate her severity, and humble her a little.

Nothing sooner brings down a proud spirit, than a sense of lying under pecuniary obligations. This ~~has~~ always made me solicitous to avoid laying myself under

der any such: Yet sometimes formerly have I been put to it, and cursed the tardy revolution of the quarterly periods. And yet I ever made shift to avoid anticipations: *I never would eat the calf in the cow's belly*, as Lord M.'s phrase is: For what is that, but to hold our lands upon *tenant courtesy*, the vilest of all tenures? To be deny'd a fox-chace, for fear of breaking down a fence upon my own grounds? To be clamour'd at for repairs *studied* for, rather than *really wanted*? To be prated to by a bumpkin with his hat on, and his arms folded, as if he defied your expectations of that sort; his foot firmly fixed, as if upon his own ground; and you forced to take his arch-leers, and stupid gybes; intimating by the whole of his conduct, that he has had it in his power to oblige you, and, if you behave civilly, may oblige you again?—I, who think I have a right to break every man's head I pass by, if I like not his looks, to bear this!—I no more could do it, than I could borrow of an insolent uncle, or inquisitive aunt, who would thence think themselves intitled to have an account of all my life and actions laid before them for their review and censure.

My charmer, I see, has a pride like my own: But she has no *distinction* in her pride: Nor knows the pretty fool, that there is nothing nobler, nothing more delightful, than for lovers to be conferring and receiving obligations from one another. In this very farm-yard, to give thee a familiar instance, I have more than once seen this remark illustrated. A strutting rascal of a cock have I beheld chuck, chuck, chuck, chuck-ing his mistress to him, when he has found a single barley-corn, taking it up with his bill, and letting it drop five or six times, still repeating his chucking invitation: And when two or three of his feather'd ladies strive who shall be the first for't [O Jack! a cock is a grand-signor of a bird!], he directs the bill of the foremost to it; and, when she has
got

got the dirty pearl, he struts over her with an erected crest, and an exulting chuck—a chuck-aw-aw-w, cir-cling round her, with dropt wings, sweeping the dust in humble courtship: While the obliged she, half-shy, half-willing, by her cowering tail, half-stretch'd wings, yet seemingly affrighted eyes, and contracted neck, lets one see, that she knows the barley-corn was not all he called her for.

When he comes to that part of his narrative, where he mentions the proposing of the lady's maid Hannah, or one of the young gentlewomen, to attend her, thus he writes :

Now, Belford, canst thou imagine what I meant by proposing Hannah, or one of the girls here, for her attendant? I'll give thee a month to guess.

Thou wilt not pretend to guess, thou say'st.

Well, then, I'll tell thee.

Believing she would certainly propose to have that favourite wench about her, as soon as she was a little settled, I had caused the girl to be inquired after, with an intent to make interest, some how or other, that a month's warning should be insisted on by her master or mistress, or by some other means, which I had not determined upon, to prevent her coming to her. But fortune fights for me. The wench is luckily ill; a violent rheumatic disorder, which has obliged her to leave her place, confines her to her chamber: Poor Hannah! How I pity the girl! These things are very hard upon industrious servants!—I intend to make the poor maid a small present on the occasion——I know it will oblige my charmer.

And so, Jack, pretending not to know any thing of the matter, I pressed her to send for the wench. She knew I had always a regard for this servant, because of her honest love to her lady: But now I have a greater regard for her than ever. Calamity, tho' a poor servant's calamity, will rather increase than diminish

minsh good-will, with a truly generous master or mistress.

As to one of the young Sorlings's attendance, there was nothing at all in proposing that ; for if either of them had been chosen by *her*, and permitted by the *mother* [Two chances in *that* !], it would have been only till I had fixed upon another. And if afterwards they had been loth to part, I could easily have given my beloved a jealousy, which would have done the business ; or to the girl, who would have quitted her country dairy, such a relish for a London one, as would have made it very convenient for her to fall in love with Will ; or perhaps I could have done still better for her with Lord M.'s chaplain, who is very desirous of standing well with his Lord's presumptive heir.

A blessing on thy honest heart, Lovelace ! thou'lt say ; for thou art for providing for every-body.

He gives an account of the serious part of their conversation, with no great variation from the lady's account of it : And when he comes to that part of it, where he bids her remember, that reformation cannot be a sudden thing, he asks his friend ;

Is not this fair play ? Is it not dealing ingenuously ? Then the observation, I will be bold to say, is founded in truth and nature. But there was a little touch of policy in it besides ; that the lady, if I should fly out again, should not think me too gross an hypocrite : For, as I plainly told her, I was afraid, that my fits of reformation were *but* fits and sallies ; but I hoped her example would fix them into habits. But it is so discouraging a thing, to have my mistress so very good !—I protest I know not how to look up at her ! Now, as I am thinking, if I could pull her down a little nearer to my own level ; that is to say, could prevail upon her to do something that would argue imperfection, something to repent of ; we should jog

on much more equally, and be better able to comprehend one another: And so the comfort would be mutual, and the remorse not all on one side.

He acknowledges, that he was greatly affected and pleased with the lady's serious arguments at the time: But even then was apprehensive that his temper would not hold. Thus he writes:

This lady says serious things in so agreeable a manner; and then her voice is all harmony, when she touches a subject she is pleased with; that I could have listened to her for half a day together. But yet I am afraid, if she *falls*, as they call it, she will lose a good deal of that *pathos*, of that noble self-confidence, which gives a good person, as I now see, a visible superiority over one *not* so good.

But, after all, Belford, I would fain know why people call such free livers as you and me *hypocrites*.—That's a word I hate; and should take it very ill to be called by it. For myself, I have as good motions, and perhaps have them as frequently as any-body. All the business is, they don't hold; or to speak more in character, I don't take the care some do, to conceal my lapses.

L E T T E R XXVI.

Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Sat. April 15.

THO' pretty much pressed in time, and oppressed by my mamma's watchfulness, I will write a few lines upon the new light that has broke in upon your gentleman; and send it by a particular hand.

I know not what to think of him upon it.—He talks well; but judge him by Rowe's lines, he is certainly a *dissembler*, odious as the sin of hypocrisy, and, as he says, that other of ingratitude, are to him.

And pray, my dear, let me ask you, Could he have triumphed, as it is said he has done, over so many of our sex, had he not been egregiously guilty of *both* sins?

His ingenuity is the thing that staggers me: Yet is he cunning enough to know, that whoever accuses himself first, blunts the edge of an adversary's accusation.

He is certainly a man of sense: There is more hope of such a one, than of a fool: And there must be a *beginning* to a reformation. These I will allow in his favour.

But this, I think, is the only way to judge of his specious confessions and self-accusations——Does he confess any thing that you knew not before, or that you are not likely to find out from others?——If nothing else, what does he confess to his own disadvantage? You have heard of his duels: You have heard of his seductions: All the world has.——He owns therefore what it would be to no purpose to conceal; and his ingenuity is a salvo——‘Why, this, Madam, is no more than Mr. Lovelace *himself* acknowledges.’

Well, but, what is now to be done?—You must make the best of your situation: And as you say, so say I, I hope that will not be bad: For I like all that he has proposed to you of Windsor, and his Canon's house. His readiness to leave you, and go himself in quest of a lodging, likewise looks well.—And I think there is nothing can be so properly done, as [whether you get to a Canon's house or not] that the Canon joins you together in wedlock as soon as possible.

I much approve, however, of all your cautions, of all your vigilance, and of every thing you have done, but of your meeting of him. Yet, in my disapprobation of that, I judge by the event only; for who would have divined, it would have concluded as it did? But he is the devil, by his own account: And had he run
away

away with the wretched Solmes; and your more wretched brother, and been himself transported for life, he should have had my free consent for all three.

What use does he make of that Joseph Leman!—His ingenuoufness, I must once more say, confounds me; but if, my dear, you can forgive your brother, I don't know whether you ought to be angry at him on that account; yet I have wish'd fifty times, since he got you away, that you were rid of him, whether it were by a burning fever, by hanging, by drowning, or by a broken neck; provided it were before he laid you under a necessity to go into mourning for him.

I repeat my hitherto-rejected offer. May I send it safely by your old man?—I have reasons for not sending it by Hickman's servant; unless I had a bank note or notes. Inquiring for such may cause distrust. My mamma is so busy, so inquisitive!—I don't love suspicious tempers.

And here she is continually in and out—I must break off. Mr. Hickman begs his most respectful compliments to you, and offer of services. I told him I would oblige him, because minds in trouble take kindly any-body's civilities: But that he must not imagine he obliged me by this: Since I should think the man or woman either blind or stupid, who admired not a person of your exalted merit for her own sake, and wish'd not to serve her without view to other reward, than the honour of serving her.

To be sure, that was his principal motive, with great daintiness he said it: But with a kiss of his hand, and a bow to my feet, he hoped, that that fine lady's being my friend did not lessen the merit of the reverence he really had for her. Believe me ever, what you shall ever find me,

Your faithful and affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

L E T-

LETTER XXVII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Sat. Afternoon.

I Detain your messenger while I write in answer to yours; my poor old man not being very well.

You dishearten me a good deal about this man. I may be too willing, from my sad circumstances, to think the best of him.—If his pretences to reformation are but pretences, what must be his intent? But can the heart of man be so very vile? Can he, *dare* he, mock the Almighty?—But may I not, from one very sad reflection, think better of him; That I am thrown too much in his power, to make it *necessary* for him (except he were to intend the very utmost villainy by me) to be such a shocking hypocrite?—He must, at least, be in earnest, at the *time* he gives the better hopes. Surely he must.—You yourself must join with me in this hope, or you could not wish me to be so dreadfully yoked.

But after all, I had rather be independent of him, and of his family, altho' I have an high opinion of them; *much* rather: At least till I see what my own may be brought to.—Otherwise, I think, it were best for me, at once, to cast myself into Lady Betty's protection. All would then be conducted with decency, and perhaps many mortifications would be spared me. But then I must be *his*, at all adventures, and be thought to defy my own family. And shall I not see the issue of one application first?—And yet I cannot make this, till I am settled somewhere, and at a distance from him.

Mr. Sorlings shew'd me a letter this morning, which she had received from her sister Greeme last night; in which (hoping I will forgive her forward zeal, if her sister thinks fit to shew her letter to me) she

wishes

‘wishes for all the noble family’s sake, and she hopes she may say for my own, that I will be pleased to yield to make his honour, as she calls him, happy.’ She grounds her *officiousness*, as she calls it, upon what he was so *condescending* [her word also] to say to her yesterday, in his way to Windsor, on her *presuming* to ask, If she might soon give him joy. ‘That no man ever loved a woman as he loved me: That no woman ever so well deserved to be beloved: That in every conversation, he admired me still more: That he loved me with such a purity, as he had never believed himself capable of, or that a mortal creature could have inspired him with; looking upon me as all *soul*; as an angel sent down to save *his* ;’ and a great deal more of this sort: ‘But that he apprehended my consent to make him happy was at a greater distance than he wished. And complain’d of my too severe restrictions upon him, before I honour’d him with my *confidence*: Which restrictions must be as sacred to him, as if they were parts of the marriage-contract, &c.

What, my dear, shall I say to this?—How shall I take it? Mrs. Greme is a good woman. Mrs. Sorlings is a good woman. And this letter agrees with the conversation I thought, and still think, so agreeable.—Yet what means the man by foregoing the opportunities he has had to declare himself?—What mean his complaints of my restrictions to Mrs. Greme? He is not a bashful man!—But you say, I inspire people with an awe of me!—An awe, my dear!—As how? —

I am quite petulant at times, to find, that I am bound to see the workings of this *subtle*, or this *giddy* spirit; which shall I call it?

How I am punish’d, as I frequently think, for my vanity, in hoping to be an *example* to young persons of my sex! Let me be but a warning, and I will now be contented. For, be my destiny what it may, I shall

shall never be able to hold up my head again among my best friends and worthiest companions.

It is one of the cruellest circumstances that attends the faults of the inconsiderate, that she makes all who love her unhappy, and gives joy only to her own enemies, and to the enemies of her family.

What an useful lesson would this afford, were it properly inculcated at the time that the tempted mind was balancing upon a doubtful adventure?

You know not, my dear, the worth of a virtuous man; and noble-minded as you are in most particulars, you partake of the common weakness of human nature, in being apt to flight what is in your own power.

You would not think of using Mr. Lovelace, were he your suitor, as you do the much worthier Mr. Hickman—Would you? You know who says, in my mamma's case, '*Much will bear, much shall bear, all the world through (a).*' Mr. Hickman, I fancy, would be glad to know the lady's name, who made such an observation. He would think it hardly possible, but such a one should benefit by her own remark; and would be apt to wish his Miss Howe acquainted with her.

Gentleness of heart, surely, is not despicable in a man. Why, if it be, is the highest distinction a man can arrive at, that of a *Gentleman*?—A distinction which a prince may not deserve. For manners, more than birth, fortune, or title, are requisite in this character. Manners are indeed the essence of it. And shall it be generally said, and Miss Howe not be an exception to it [as once you wrote (*b*)], that our sex are best dealt with by boisterous and unruly spirits?

Forgive me, my dear; and love me as you used to do. For altho' my fortunes are changed, my heart is not: Nor ever will, while it bids my pen tell you,
that

(a) Vol. I. p. 58.

(b) Vol. II. p. 13.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

155

that it must cease to beat, when it is not as much yours, as

Your CLARISSA HARLOWE'S.

L E T T E R XXVIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Saturday Evening.

MR. Lovelace has seen divers apartments at Windsor; but not one, he says, that he thought fit for me, or in any manner answering my description.

He had been very solicitous to keep to the letter of my instructions: Which looks well: And the better I liked him, as, altho' he propos'd that town, he came back, dissuading me from it: For he said, that, in his journey from thence, he had thought Windsor, altho' of his own propos'd, a wrong choice; because I covet'd privacy, and that was a place generally visited and admired.

I told him, that if Mrs. Sorlings thought me not an incumbrance, I would be willing to stay there a little longer; provided he would leave me, and go to Lord M.'s, or to London, which ever he thought best.

He hop'd, he said, that he might suppose me absolutely safe from the insults or attempts of my brother; and therefore, if it would make me easier, he would obey, for a few days at least.

He again propos'd to send for Hannah—I told him I design'd to do so, thro' you: And shall I beg of you, my dear, to cause the honest creature to be sent to? Your faithful Robert, I think, knows where she is. Perhaps she will be permitted to quit her place directly, by allowing a month's wages, which I will repay her.

He took notice of the serious humour he found me in, and of the redness of my eyes: I had just been answering your letter; and, had he not approach'd me,

me, on his coming off his journey, in a very respectful manner, had he not made an unexceptionable report of his inquiries, and been so ready to go from me, at the very first word ; I was prepar'd (notwithstanding the good terms we parted upon when he set out for Windsor) to have given him a very unwelcome reception : For the contents of your last letter had so affected me, that the moment I saw him, I beheld with indignation the seducer, who had been the cause of all the evils I suffer, and have suffered.

He hinted to me, that he had received a letter from Lady Betty, and another, as I understood him, from one of the Miss Montagues. If they take notice of *me* in them, I wonder that he did not acquaint me with the contents. I am afraid, my dear, that his relations are among those, who think I have taken a rash and inexcusable step. It is not to my credit to let even them know, how I have been frightened out of myself : And who knows but they may hold me unworthy of their alliance, if they may think my flight a voluntary one ?—O my dear, how uneasy to us are our reflections upon every doubtful occurrence, when we know we have been prevailed upon to do a wrong thing !

Sunday Morning.

WHAT an additional concern must I have in my reflections upon Mr. Lovelace's hatred of all my relations ?—He calls some of them implacable ; but I am afraid that he is as implacable himself, as the most inveterate of them.

I could not forbear, with great earnestness, to express my wishes for a reconciliation with them ; and, in order to begin a treaty for that purpose, to re-urge his departure from me : He gave himself high airs upon the occasion, not doubting, he said, that he was to be the preliminary sacrifice ; and then he reflected in a very free manner upon my brother ; nor spared my father himself.

So

So little consideration for me, my dear!—Yet it had always, as I told him, been his polite way, to treat my family with contempt; wicked creature that I was, to know it, and yet to hold correspondence with him!—

But let me tell you, Sir, said I, that whatever your violent temper and contempt of me, may drive you to say of my brother, I will not hear my father spoken ill of. It is enough, surely, that I have tormented his worthy heart by my disobedience; and that his once beloved child has been spirited away from him.—To have his character reflected upon, by the man who has been the cause of all, is what I will not bear.

He said many things in his own defence; but not one, as I told him, that could justify a daughter to *bear*, or a man to *say*, who pretended what he pretended to that daughter.

And then, seeing me very sincerely angry, he begg'd my pardon, tho' not in a very humble manner. But, to change the subject, he took notice of the two letters he had received, one from Lady Betty Lawrence, the other from Miss Montague; and read me passages out of both.

Why did not the man shew them to me last night? Was he afraid of giving me too much pleasure?

Lady Betty in hers, expresses herself in the most obliging manner, in relation to me. 'She wishes him
' so to behave, as to encourage me to make him soon
' happy. She desires her compliments to me; and
' expresses her impatience to see, as her niece, so
' *celebrated* a lady [Those are her high words]. She
' shall take it for an honour, she says, to be put into
' a way to oblige me. She hopes I will not too long
' delay the ceremony; because that perform'd, will
' be to her, and to Lord M. and lady Sarah, a
' sure pledge of her nephew's merits, and good be-
' haviour.'

She says, ‘ She was always sorry to hear of the hardships I had met with on his account. That he will be the most ingrateful of men, if he make not *all up* to me: And that she thinks it incumbent upon all their family to supply to me the lost favour of my own: And, for her part, nothing of that kind, she bids him assure me, shall be wanting.’

Her Ladyship observes, ‘ That the treatment he had received from my family, would have been more unaccountable than it was, with such natural and accidental advantages as he had, had it not been owing to his own careless manners. But she hopes, that he will convince the Harlowe-family, that they had thought worse of him than he had deserved; since now it was in his power to establish his character for ever: Which she prays God to enable him to do, as well for his own honour, as for the honour of their house’ [was the magnificent word].

She concludes, with ‘ desiring to be informed of our nuptials the moment they are celebrated, that she may be with the earliest in felicitating me on the happy occasion.’

But her Ladyship gives me no direct invitation to attend her before marriage. Which I might have expected from what he had told me.

He then shew’d me part of Miss Montague’s more sprightly letter, ‘ congratulating him upon the honour he had obtain’d, of the *confidence of so admirable a Lady*’ [Those are *her* words. *Confidence*, my dear! Nobody, indeed, as you say, will believe otherwise, were they to be told the truth: And you see, that Miss Montague (and all his family, I suppose) think the step I have taken, an *extraordinary* one]. ‘ She also wishes for his speedy nuptials; and to see her new cousin at M. Hall: As to Lord M. she tells him, and her sister; and in general all the well-wishers of their family.

‘ When-

‘ Whenever this happy day shall be passed, she proposes, she says, to attend me, and to make one in my train to M. Hall, if his lordship shall continue so ill of the gout, as at present. But that should he get better, he will himself attend me, she is sure, and conduct me thither: And afterwards quit either of his three seats to us, till we shall be settled to our mind.’

This young lady says nothing in excuse for not meeting me on the road, or at St. Albans, as he had made me expect she would: Yet mentions her having been indisposed. He had also told me, that Lord M. was ill of the gout; which Miss Montague’s letter confirms.

LETTER XXIX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE; In Continuation.

YOU may believe, my dear, that these letters put me in good humour with him. He saw it in my countenance, and congratulated himself upon it. But yet I wonder’d that I could not have the contents of them communicated to me last night.

He then urged me to go directly to Lady Betty’s, on the strength of her letter.

But how, said I, can I do that, were I out of all hope of a reconciliation with my friends [which yet, however improbable to be brought about, is my duty to attempt] as her ladyship has given me no particular invitation?

That, he was sure, was owing to her doubt that it would be accepted; Else she had done it with the greatest pleasure in the world.

That doubt itself, I said, was enough to deter me: Since her ladyship, who knew so well the boundaries of the fit and the unfit, by her not expecting I would accept of an invitation, had she given it, would have reason to think me very forward, if I *bad* accepted it;

and much more forward to go without it. Then, said I, I thank *you*, Sir, I have no cloaths fit to go any-where, or to be seen by any-body.

O, I was fit to appear in the drawing-room, were full dress and jewels to be excused, and should make the most amiable [*extraordinary* he must mean] figure there. He was astonish'd at the elegance of my dress. By what art he knew not, but I appeared to such advantage, as if I had a different suit every day. Besides, his cousins Montague would supply me with all I wanted for the present; and he would write to Miss Charlotte accordingly, if I would give him leave.

Do you think me the jay in the fable? said I.—Would you have me visit the owners of the borrowed dresses in their own cloaths?—Surely, Mr. Lovelace, you think I have either a very low, or a very confident mind.

Would I choose to go to London, for a few days only, in order to furnish myself with cloaths?

Not at *his* expence. I was not prepared to wear his livery yet.

I could not have appeared in earnest to him, in my displeasure at his artful contrivances to get me away, if I were not occasionally to shew my real fretfulness upon the destitute condition he has reduced me to. When people set out wrong together it is very difficult to avoid recriminations.

He wish'd he knew but my mind—That should direct him in his proposals, and it would be his delight to observe it, whatever it was.

My mind was, that he should leave me out of hand.—How often must I tell him so?—

If I were any-where but here, he would obey me, he said, if I insisted upon it. But if I would assert my right, that would be infinitely preferable, in his opinion, to any other measure *but one*; *which he durst only hint at*: For then, admitting *his* visits, or refusing them, as I pleased [granting a correspondence by letter

letter only] it would appear to all the world, that what I had done, was but in order to do myself justice.

How often must I tell you, Sir, that I will not litigate with my papa?—Do you think that my unhappy circumstances will alter my notions of my own duty, so far as it is practicable for me to perform it? —How can I obtain possession without litigation, and but by my trustees? One of them will be against me; the other is abroad. This must take up time, were I *disposed* to fall upon this measure,—And what I want, is present independence, and your *immediate* absence.

Upon his soul, the wretch swore, he did not think it safe, for the reasons he had before given, to leave me here. —He hoped I would think of some place, to which I should like to go. But he must take the liberty to say, that he hoped his behaviour had not been so exceptionable, as to make me so *very* earnest for his absence in the interim: And the less, surely, as I was almost *eternally* shutting up myself from him; altho' he presumed, he said, to assure me, that he never went from me, but with a corrected heart, and with strengthened resolutions of improving by my example.

Eternally shutting myself up from you! repeated I— I hope, Sir, that you will not pretend to take it *amiss*, that I expect to be uninvaded in my retirements. I hope you do not think me so weak a creature (novice as you have found me in a very capital instance) as to be fond of occasions to hear your fine speeches, especially as no differing circumstances require your over-frequent visits; nor that I am to be addressed to as if I thought hourly professions needful to assure me of your honour.

He seemed a little disconcerted.

You know, Mr. Lovelace, proceeded I, why I am so earnest for your absence. It is, that I may appear

to the world independent of you ; and in hopes, by that means, to find it less difficult to set on foot a reconciliation with my friends. And now let me add (in order to make you easier as to the terms of that hoped-for reconciliation) that since I find I have the good fortune to stand so well with your relations, I will, from time to time, acquaint you, by letter, when you are absent, with every step I shall take, and with every overture that shall be made to me. But not with an intention to render myself accountable to you, neither as to my acceptance or non-acceptance of those overtures. They know, that I have a power given me by my grandfather's will, to bequeath the estate he left me, together with my share of the effects, in a way that may affect them, though not absolutely from them. This *consideration*, I hope, will procure me *some* from them, when their passion subsides, and they know I am independent of you.

Charming reasoning !—And let him tell me, that the assurance I had given him was all he wished-for. It was more than he could ask.—What a happiness to have a woman of honour and generosity to depend upon !—Had he, on his first entrance into the world, met with such a one, he had never been other than a man of strict virtue—But all, he hoped, was for the best ; since, in that case, he had never, perhaps, had the happiness now in his view ; because his relations had been always urging him to marry ; and that before he had the honour to know me.—And now, as he had not been so bad as some peoples malice reported him to be, he hoped, he should have more merit in his repentance, than if he had never err'd.

I said, I took it for granted, that he assented to the reasoning he seemed to approve, and would leave me. And then I asked him, What he really, and in his most deliberate mind, would advise me to, in my present situation ? He must needs see, I said, that I was at a great loss what to resolve upon : intirely a stranger

ger to London, having no adviser, no protector, at present:—Himself, he must give me leave to tell him, greatly deficient in *practice*, if not in the *knowledge*, of those decorums, which, I had apprehended, were indispensable in the character of a man of birth, fortune, and education.

He imagines himself, I find, to be a very polite man, and cannot bear to be thought otherwise. He put up his lip,—I am, sorry for it Madam—A man of breeding, a man of politeness, give me leave to say, colouring, is much more of a black swan with you, than with any lady I ever met with.

Then that is your misfortune, Mr. Lovelace, as well as mine at present.—Every woman of discernment, I am confident, knowing what I know of you now, would say as I say [I had a mind to mortify a pride, that I am sure deserves to be mortify'd] that your politeness is not regular, nor constant. It is not habit. It is seen too much by fits and starts, and sallies, and those not spontaneous. You must be *re-minded* into them.

O Lord! O Lord!—Poor I!—was the light, yet the half-angry wretch's self-pitying expression!—

I proceeded.—Upon my word, Sir, you are not the accomplish'd man, which your talents and opportunities would have led one to expect you to be.—You are indeed in your noviciate [He had, in a former conversation, used that word] as to every laudable attainment.—

L E T T E R XXX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE; In Continuation.

I Was going on to tell him more of my mind, since the subject was introduced and treated by him so lightly; but he interrupted me—Dear, dear Madam, spare me. I am sorry that I have lived to this hour
for

for nothing at all. But surely you could not have quitted a subject so much more agreeable, and so much more suitable, I will say, to our present situation, if you had not too cruel a pleasure in mortifying a man, who before looked up to you with a diffidence in his own merits too great to permit him to speak half his mind to you.—Be pleased but to return to the subject we were upon; and at another time I will gladly embrace correction from the only mouth in the world so qualify'd to give it.

You talk of reformation, sometimes, Mr. Lovelace; and in so talking acknowledge errors. But I see you can very ill bear the reproof, which perhaps you are not solicitous to avoid *giving* occasion for.—Far be it from me to take delight in finding fault. I should be glad for both our sakes, since my situation is what it is, that I could do nothing but praise you. But failures which affect a mind, that need not be very delicate to be affected by them, are too grating to be passed over in silence by a person, who wishes to be thought in earnest in her own duties.

I admire your delicacy, Madam, again interrupted he—Altho' I suffer by it, yet would I not have it otherwise: Indeed I would not, when I consider of it. It is an angelic delicacy, which sets you above all our sex, and even above your own. It is *natural* to you, Madam; so you may not think it extraordinary.—But there is nothing like it on earth, said the flatterer—[What company has he kept?

But let us return to the former subject—You were so good as to ask me, what I would advise you to do—I want but to make you easy, I want but to see you fixed to your liking—Your faithful Hannah with you.—Your reconciliation with those with whom you wish to be reconciled, set on foot, and in a train.

And now let me mention to you different proposals, in hopes that some one of them may be acceptable to you.

I will

I will go to Mrs. Howe, or to Miss Howe, or to whomsoever you would have me go, and endeavour to prevail upon them to receive you.

Do you incline to go to Florence to your cousin Morden?—I will furnish you with the opportunity of going thither, either by sea to Leghorn, or by land through France.—Perhaps I may be able to procure one of the ladies of my family to attend you. Either Charlotte or Patty would rejoice in such an opportunity of seeing France and Italy. As for myself, I will only be your escorte; in disguise, if you will have it so, even in your livery, that your punctilio may not receive offence by my attendance.

I told him, I would consider of all he had said. But that I hoped for a line or two from my aunt Hervey, if not from my sister, to both of whom I had written; which, if I were to be so favoured, might help to determine me. Mean time, if he would withdraw, I would particularly consider of this proposal of his, in relation to my cousin Morden. And if it held its weight with me, so far as to take your opinion upon it, he should know my mind in an hour's time.

He withdrew with great respect: And in an hour's time returned: And then I told him it was unnecessary to trouble you for your opinion about it. My cousin Morden was soon expected. I could not admit of his accompanying me, in any shape, or upon any condition. It was highly improbable that I should obtain the favour of either of his cousins company: And if that could be done, it would be the same thing in the world's eye, as if he went himself.

This led us into another conversation: Which shall be the subject of my next.

LETTER XXXI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE; In Continuation.

MR. Lovelace told me, that on the supposition that his proposal in relation to my cousin Morden might not be accepted, he had been studying to find out, if possible, somewhat that might be agreeable, and which might convince me, that he preferr'd my satisfaction to his own.

He then offered to go himself, and procure my Hannah to come and attend me: As I had declin'd the service of either of the young Miss Sorlings's, he was extremely solicitous, he said, that I should have a servant, in whose integrity I might confide.

I told him, that you would be so kind, as to send to engage Hannah, if possible.

If any thing, he said, should prevent *her* from coming, suppose he himself waited upon Miss Howe, to desire her, to lend me her servant till I was provided to my mind?

I said, Your mamma's high displeasure at the step I had taken (as *she* supposed, voluntarily), had deprived me of any open assistance of that sort from you.

He was amazed, so much as Mrs. Howe herself used to admire me; and so great an influence as Miss was supposed to have over her mamma (and *deserved* to have) that that lady should take upon herself to be so much offended with me. He wish'd, that the man, who took such pains to keep up and inflame the passions of my father and uncles, weré not at the bottom of this mischief too.

I was afraid, I said, that my brother *was*; or else my uncle Antony, I dared to say, would not have taken such pains to set Mrs. Howe against me, as I understood he had done.

Since I had declined visiting his aunts, he asked me, If I would admit of a visit from his cousin Mon-

Montague, and accept of a servant of hers for the present?

That was not, I said, an unacceptable proposal: But I would first see, if my friends would send me my cloaths, that I might not make such a giddy and run-away appearance to any of his relations.

If I pleased, he would make another journey to Windsor, to make more particular inquiry among the canons, or in any worthy family.

Were not his objections as to the publicness of the place, I asked him, as strong now as before?

I remember, my dear, in one of your former letters, you mentioned London, as the privatest place to be in (*a*): And I said, that since he made such pretences against leaving me here, as shewed he had no intention to do so; and since he engag'd to go from me, and to leave me to pursue my own measures, if I were elsewhere, and since his presence made these lodgings inconvenient to me, I should not be disinclined to go to London, did I know any-body there.

As he had several times proposed London to me, I expected, that he would eagerly have embraced that motion from me. But he took not ready hold of it: Yet I thought his eye approved of it.

We are both great watchers of each other's eyes; and indeed seem to be more than half afraid of each other.

He then made a grateful proposal to me; that I would send for my Mrs. Norton to attend me.

He saw by my eyes, he said, that he had at last been happy in an expedient, which would answer both our wishes. Why, says he, did not I think of it before?—And snatching my hand, Shall I write, Madam? Shall I send? Shall I go and fetch the good woman myself?

After

(*a*) See Vol. II. p. 232.

After a little consideration, I told him, that this was indeed a grateful motion: But that I apprehended it would put her to a difficulty, which she would not be able to get over; as it would make a woman of her known prudence appear to countenance a fugitive daughter, in opposition to her parents: And as her coming to me would deprive her of my mamma's favour, without its being in my power to make it up to her.

O my beloved creature! said he, generously enough, let not this be an obstacle. I will do every thing for the good woman you wish to have done——Let me go for her.

More coolly than perhaps his generosity deserved, I told him, It was impossible but I must soon hear from my friends. I should not, mean time, embroil any-body with them. Not Mrs. Norton especially, from whose interest in, and mediation with, my mamma, I might expect some good, were she to keep herself in a neutral state: That besides, the good woman had a mind above her fortune; and would sooner want, than be beholden to any-body improperly.

Improperly, said he!—Have not persons of merit a *right* to all the benefits conferr'd upon them?—Mrs. Norton is so good a woman, that I shall think she lays me under an obligation, if she will put it in my power to serve her; altho' she were not to augment it, by giving me the opportunity at the same time, of contributing to your pleasure and satisfaction.

How could this man, with such powers of right thinking, be so far deprav'd by evil habits, as to disgrace his talents by wrong acting?

Is there not room, after all, thought I, at the time, for hope (as he so lately led me to hope), that the example it will behove me, for both our sakes, to endeavour to set him, may influence him to
a change

a change of manners, in which both may find their account?

Give me leave, Sir, said I, to tell you, there is a strange mixture in your mind. You must have taken pains to suppress many good motions and reflections, as they arose, or levity must have been surprisingly predominant in it.—But as to the subject we were upon, there is no taking any resolutions till I hear from my friends.

Well, Madam, I can only say, I would find out some expedient, if I could, that should be agreeable to you. But since I cannot, will you be so good as to tell me, what you would *wish* to have done? Nothing in the world but I will comply with, excepting leaving you here, at such a distance from the place I shall be in, if any thing should happen; and in a place where my gossiping rascals have made me in a manner public, for want of proper cautions at first.

These vermin, added he, have a pride they can hardly rein-in, when they serve a man of family. They boast of their master's pedigree and descent, as if they were related to him. Nor is any thing they know of him, or of his affairs, a secret to one another, were it what would hang him.

If so, thought I, men of family should take care to give them subjects worth boasting of.

I am quite at a loss, said I, what to do, or whither to go. Would you, Mr. Lovelace, in earnest, advise me to think of going to London?

And I looked at him with steadfastness. But nothing could I gather from his looks.

At first, Madam, said he, I was for proposing London, as I was then more apprehensive of pursuit. But as your relations seem cooler on that head, I am the more indifferent about the place you go to.—So as you are pleased—So as you are easy, I shall be happy.

This indifference of his to London, I cannot but say, made me like going thither the better. I asked him [to hear what he would say], if he could recommend me to any *particular place* in London?

No, he said: None that was fit for me, or that I should like. His friend Belford, indeed, had very handsome lodgings, near Soho-Square, at a relation's, a lady of virtue and honour. These, as Mr. Belford was generally in the country, he could borrow till I were better accommodated.

I was resolved to refuse these at the first mention, as I should any other he had named. Nevertheless, I will see, thought I, if he has really thoughts of these for me. If I break off the talk here, and he resume this proposal with earnestness in the morning, I shall apprehend, that he is less indifferent than he seems to be, about my going to London; and that he has already a lodging in his eye for me.— And then I won't go at all.

But after such generous motions from him, I really think it a little barbarous to act and behave as if I thought him capable of the blackest and most ingrateful baseness. But his character, his principles, are so faulty!—He is so light, so vain, so various, that there is no certainty that he will be next hour what he is This. Then, my dear, I have no guardian now; no father, no mother! Nothing but God and my vigilance to depend upon. And I have no reason to expect a miracle in my favour.

Well, Sir, said I, rising, to leave him, something must be resolved upon: But I will postpone this subject till to-morrow morning.

He would fain have engag'd me longer; but I said, I would see him as early as he pleased in the morning. He might think of any convenient place in London, or near it, mean time.

And so I retired from him. As I do from my pen; hoping for better rest for the few hours that will

will remain for that desirable refreshment, than I have had of a long time.

CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE; *In Continuation.*

Monday Morning, April 17.

LATE as I went to bed, I have had very little rest. Sleep and I have quarrell'd; and altho' I court it, it will not be friends. I hope its Fellow-irreconcilables at Harlowe-Place, enjoy its balmy comforts. Else, that will be an aggravation of my fault. My brother and Sister, I dare say, want it not.

Mr. Lovelace, who is an early riser as well as I, join'd me in the garden about six; and, after the usual salutations, ask'd me to resume our last night's subject. It was upon lodgings at London, he said.

I think you mentioned one to me, Sir;—Did you not?

Yes, Madam, but (watching the turn of my countenance) rather as what you'd be welcome to, than perhaps approve of.

I believe so too. To go to town upon an *uncertainty*, I own, is not agreeable; but to be oblig'd to any gentleman of your acquaintance, when I want to be thought independent of you; and to a gentleman especially, to whom my friends are to direct to me, if they vouchsafe to take notice of me at all; is an absurd thing to mention.

He did not mention it as what he imagin'd I would accept, but only to confirm to me what he had said, that he himself knew of none fit for me.

Has not your family, Madam, some one tradesman they deal with, who has conveniencies of this kind? would make it worth such a person's while to keep

the secret of your being at his house. Traders are dealers in pins, said he; and will be more oblig'd by a penny customer than a pound present, because it is in their way:—Yet will refuse neither.

My father's tradesmen, I said, would, no doubt, be the first employ'd to find me out: So that propofal was as absurd as the other.

We had a good deal of discourse upon the same topic. But, at last, the result of all was this.—He wrote a letter to one Mr. Doleman, a marry'd man of fortune and character [I excepting to Mr. Belford], desiring him to provide decent apartments ready furnish'd [for I had told him what they should be] for a single woman; consisting of a bedchamber; another, for a maid-servant, with the use of a dining-room or parlour. This he gave me to peruse; and then sealed it up, and dispatch'd it away in my presence, by one of his own servants, who having business in town, is to bring back an answer.

I attend the issue of it; holding myself in readiness to set out for London, unless you advise the contrary. I will only add, that I am

Your ever affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R XXXIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Sat. Sunday, Monday.

HE gives, in several letters, the substance of what is contained in the last of the Lady's.

He tells his friend, that calling at the Lawn, in his way to M. Hall (for he owns that he went not to Windsor,) he found the letters from Lady Betty Lawrence, and his cousin Montague, which Mrs. Greme was about sending to him by a special messenger.

He

He gives the particulars from Mrs. Greme's report, of what passed between the Lady and her, as in p. 48, 49. and makes such declarations to Mrs. Greme of his honour and affection to the Lady, as put her upon writing the letter to her sister Sorlings, the contents of which are given by the Lady, in p. 152, 153. He then accounts as follows for the serious humour he found her in, on his return.

Upon such good terms when we parted, I was surpriz'd to find so solemn a brow upon my return, and her charming eyes red with weeping. But when I had understood she had received letters from Miss Howe, it was easy to imagine, that that little devil had put her out of humour with me.

This gives me infinite curiosity to find out the subject of their letters. But this must not be attempted yet. An invasion in an article so sacred, would ruin me beyond retrieve. Yet it vexes me to the heart to think, that she is hourly writing her whole mind, on all that passes between her and me;—I under the same roof with her;—yet kept at such awful distance, that I dare not break into a correspondence, that may perhaps be a means to blow me, and all my devices, up together!

Would it be very wicked, Jack, to knock her messenger o'the head, as he is carrying my beloved's letters, or returning with Miss Howe's? To attempt to bribe him, and not succeed, would utterly ruin me. And the man seems to be one used to poverty, one who can sit down satisfy'd with it, and enjoy it; contented with hand-to-mouth conveniencies, and not aiming to live better to-morrow, than he does to-day, and than he did yesterday. Such a one is above temptation, unless it could come cloath'd in the guise of *truth* and *trust*. What likelihood of corrupting a man who has no hope, no ambition?

Yet the rascal has but *half-life*, and groans under that.—Should I be answerable in his case, for a *whole* one?—But hang the fellow!—Let him live.—Were I a king, or a minister of state, an Antonio Perez (a), it were another thing. And yet, on second thoughts, am not I a rake, as it is called? And who ever knew a Rake to stick at any thing? But thou knowest, Jack, that the greatest half of my wickedness is vapour, to shew my invention; and that I *could* be mischievous if I would.

He collects the Lady's expressions, which his pride cannot bear:—Such as, That he is a stranger to the decorums which she thought inseparable from a man of birth and education; and that he is not the accomplish'd man he imagines himself to be; and threatens to remember them against her.

He values himself upon his proposals and speeches, which he gives to his friend pretty much to the same purpose that the Lady does in her four last letters.

When he recites his endeavouring to put her upon borrowing a servant from Miss Howe, till Hannah could come, he writes as follows:

Thou seeest, Belford, that my charmer has no notion, that Miss Howe herself is but a puppet danc'd upon my wires, at second or third hand. To outwit, and impel, as one pleases, two such girls as these, who think they know every thing; and, by taking advantage of the pride and ill-nature of the old ones of both families, to play them off likewise, at the very time that they think they are doing me spiteful displeasure; what charming revenge!—Then the sweet
Lady,

(a) Antonio Perez was first minister of Philip II. king of Spain, by whose command he caused Don Juan de Escovedo to be assassinated: Which brought on his own ruin, thro' the perfidy of his viler master. Geddes's tracts.

Lady, when I wished, that her *brother* was not at the bottom of Mrs. Howe's resentment, to tell me, That she was afraid he *was*, or her uncle would not have appear'd against her to that lady.—Pretty dear! how innocent!

But don't think me the *cause* neither of her family's malice and resentment. It is all in their hearts. I work but with their materials. They, if left to their own wicked direction, would perhaps express their revenge by fire and fagot; that is to say, by the private dagger, or by Lord Chief Justices warrants, by Law, and so forth: I only point the lightning, and teach it where to dart, without the thunder: In other words, I only guide the effects: The cause is in their malignant hearts: And, while I am doing a little mischief, I prevent a great deal.

Thus he exults on her mentioning London.

I wanted her to propose London herself. This made me again mention Windsor. If you would have a woman do one thing, you must always propose another!—The Sex! the very Sex! as I hope to be saved!—Why, they lay one under a necessity to deal doubly with them: And, when they find themselves outwitted, they cry out upon an honest fellow, who has been too hard for them at their own weapons.

I could hardly contain myself. My heart was at my throat—Down, down, said I to myself, exuberant exultation!—A sudden cough befriended me: I again turned to her, all as *indifferenced-over*, as a girl at the first long-expected question, who waits for two more. I heard out the rest of her speech: And when she had done, instead of saying any thing of London, I proposed to her to send for her Mrs. Norton.

As I knew she would be afraid of lying under obligations, had she accepted of my offer, I could have proposed to do so much for the good woman and her son, as would have made her resolve, that I should do nothing.

nothing.—This, however, not merely to avoid expence: But there was no such thing as allowing of the presence of Mrs. Norton. I might as well have had her mother, or aunt Hervey with her. Hannah, had she been able to come, and had she come, I could have done well enough with. What do I keep fellows idling in the country for, but to fall in love, and even to marry, whom I would have them marry?

How unequal is a modest woman to the adventure, when she throws herself into the power of a rake!—Punctilio will, at any time, stand for reasons with such a one. She cannot break thro' a well-tested modesty. None but the impudent little rogues, who can name the parson and the Church before you ask them for either, and undress and go to bed before you the next hour, should think of running away with a man. * * *

I am in the right train now. Every hour I doubt not, will give me an increasing interest in the affections of this proud Beauty!—I have just carried *unpoliteness* far enough to *make her afraid of me*; and to shew her, that I am *no whiner*: Every instance of politeness, *now*, will give me double credit with her! My next point will be to make her acknowledge a *lambent* flame, a preference of me to all other men, at least: And then my happy hour is not far off. An *acknowledged* love sanctifies every freedom: And one freedom begets another. And if she call me *ungenerous*, I can call her *cruel*. The sex love to be called *cruel*. Many a time have I complained of cruelty, even in the act of yielding, because I knew it gratified their pride.

Mentioning that he had only hinted at Mr. Belford's lodgings, as an instance to confirm what he had said, that he knew of none in London fit for her, he says,

I had a mind to alarm her with something furthest from my purpose; for (as much as she disliked my motion)

motion) I intended nothing by it: Mrs. Osgood is too pious a woman; and would have been more *her* friend than *mine*.

I had a view, moreover, to give her an high opinion of her own sagacity. I love, when I dig a pit, to have my prey tumble in with secure feet, and open eyes: Then a man can look down upon her, with an O-ho, charmer! how came you there!

Monday, April 17.

I have just now received a fresh piece of intelligence from my agent, honest Joseph Leman. Thou knowest the history of poor Miss Betterton of Nottingham. James Harlowe is plotting to revive the resentments of that family against me. The Harlowes took great pains, some time ago, to get to the bottom of that story. But now the foolish devils are resolved to do something in it, if they can. My head is working to make this booby 'Squire a plotter, and a clever fellow, in order to turn his plots to my advantage, supposing the Lady shall aim to keep me at arm's length when in town, and to send me from her.—But I will in proper time, let thee see Joseph's letter, and what I shall answer to it (*a*). To know, in time, a designed mischief, is, with me, to disappoint it, and to turn it upon the contriver's head.

Joseph is plaguy squamish again; but, I know, he only intends, by his qualms, to swell his merits with me. O Belford, Belford! what a vile corruptible rogue, whether in poor or in rich, is human nature!

(*a*) See Letters xlv. xlv. of this volume.

LETTER XXXIV.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

In answer to Letters xxvii. to xxxii. inclusive.

Tuesday, April 18.

YOU have a most implacable family. Another visit from your uncle Antony has not only confirm'd my mamma an enemy to our correspondence, but has almost put her upon treading in their steps.

But, to other subjects :

You plead generously for Mr. Hickman : — Perhaps, with regard to him, I may have done, as I have often done in singing or music—Begun a note or key too high ; and yet, rather than begin again, proceed, tho' I strain my voice, or spoil my tune.—But this is evident, the man is more observant for it ; and you have taught me, that the spirit which is the humbler for ill-usage, will be insolent upon better. So, good and grave Mr. Hickman, keep your distance a little longer, I beseech you. You have erected an altar to me ; and I hope you will not refuse to bow to it.

But you ask me, if I would treat Mr. Lovelace, were he to be in Mr. Hickman's place, as I do Mr. Hickman ?—Why really, my dear, I believe I should not.—I have been very sagely considering this point of behaviour, in general, on both sides, in courtship ; and I will very candidly tell you the result. I have concluded, that politeness, even to excess, is necessary on the mens part, to bring us to listen to their first addresses, in order to induce us to bow our necks to a yoke so unequal. But, upon my conscience, I very much doubt, whether a little intermingled insolence is not requisite from them, to keep up that interest, when once it has got footing. Men must not let us see, that we can make fools of them. And, I think,

that

that *smooth* love, that is to say, a passion without rubs; in other words, a passion without passion, is like a sleepy stream that is hardly seen to give motion to a straw. So that, sometimes to make us fear, and even, for a short space, to *hate* the wretch, is productive of the *contrary* extreme.

If this be so, Lovelace, than whom no man was ever more polite and obsequious at the *beginning*, has hit the very point. For his turbulence *since*, his readiness to offend, and his equal readiness to humble himself, as he is known to be a man of sense, and of courage too, must keep a woman's passion alive; and at last, tire her into a non-resistance, that shall make her as passive as a tyrant husband would wish her to be.

I verily think, that the different behaviour of our two heroes to their heroines, makes out this doctrine to demonstration. I am so much accusom'd for my own part, to Hickman's whining, creeping, submissive courtship, that I now expect nothing but whine and cringe from him; and am so little moved with his nonsense, that I am frequently forced to go to my harpsicord, to keep me awake, and to silence his humdrum. —Whereas Lovelace keeps up the ball with a wit-ness, and all his address and conversation is one continual game at racket.

Your frequent quarrels and reconciliations verify this observation: And I really believe, that, could Hickman have kept my attention alive after the Lovelace manner, only that he had preserv'd his morals, I should have marry'd the man by this time. But then he must have set out accordingly. For now, he can never, never recover himself, that's certain; but must be a dangler to the end of the courtship chapter; and, what is still worse for him, a passive to the end of his life.

Poor Hickman! perhaps you'll say. I have been called your Echo—Poor Hickman! say I.

You

You wonder, my dear, that Mr. Lovelace took not notice to you of his aunt's and cousin's letters to him, over-night. I don't like his keeping such a material and *relative* circumstance, as I may call it, one moment from you. By his communicating the contents of them to you next day, when you was angry with him, it looks as if he with-held them for occasional pacifiers; and if so, must he not have had a fore-thought that he might give you *cause* for anger? Of all the circumstances that have happen'd since you have been with him, I think I like this the least. This alone, my dear, small as it might look to an indifferent eye, in mine warrants all your cautions. Yet I think that Mrs. Greme's letter to her sister Sorlings; his repeated motions for Hannah's attendance; and for that of one of the widow Sorlings's daughters; and, above all, for that of Mrs. Norton, are agreeable counterbalances. Were it not for those circumstances, I should have said a great deal more of the other. Yet the foolish man, to let you know over-night, that he *had* such letters!—I can't tell what to make of him.

I am pleased with what these ladies write. And the more, as I have caused them to be again founded, and find, that the whole family are as desirous as ever of your alliance.

I think there can be no objection to your going to London. There, as in the centre, you'll be in the way of hearing from every-body, and sending to any-body. And then you will put all his sincerity to the test, as to his promised absence, and such-like.

But really, my dear, I think you have nothing for it but marriage. You may try (that you may say you *have* try'd), what your relations can be brought to. But the moment they refuse your proposals, submit to the yoke, and make the best of it. He will be a savage indeed, if he makes you speak out. Yet, it is my opinion, that you must bend a little; for he cannot bear to be thought slightly of. This

This was one of his speeches once; I believe design'd for me—'A woman who means one day to 'favour a man, should shew the world, for her *own* 'sake, that she distinguishes her adorer from the 'common herd.

Shall I give you another fine sentence of his, and in the true libertine stile, as he spoke it, throwing out his challenging hand? —'D—n him, if he would 'marry (indelicate as some persons thought him to 'be) the first princess on earth, if he but thought she 'balanced a minute in her choice of him or of an emperor.'

All the world, in short, expect you to have this man. They think, that you left your father's house for this very purpose. The longer the ceremony is delay'd, the worse appearance it will have in the world's eye. And it will not be the fault of some of your relations, if a slur be not thrown upon your reputation, while you continue unmarried. Your uncle **Antony** in particular, speaks rough and vile things, grounded upon the morals of his Brother-Orson. But hitherto your admirable character has antidoted the poison; the speaker is despised, and every one's indignation raised against him.

I have written thro' many interruptions: And you'll see the first sheet creased and rumpled, occasioned by putting it into my bosom, on my mamma's sudden coming upon me. We have had one very pretty debate, I'll assure you; but it is not worth while to trouble you with the particulars.—But upon my word—No matter tho'——

Your Hannah cannot attend you. The poor girl left her place about a fortnight ago, on account of a rheumatic disorder, which has confined her to her room ever since. She burst into tears, when Kitty carried to her your desire of having her, and called herself doubly unhappy, that she could not wait upon a mistress whom she so dearly loved.

Were my mamma to have answer'd my wishes, I should have been sorry Mr. Lovelace had been the *first* proposer of my Kitty for your attendant, till Hannah could come. To be altogether among strangers, and a stranger to attend you every time you remove, is a very disagreeable thing. But your considerateness and bounty will make you faithful ones wherever you go.

You must take your own way: But if you suffer any inconvenience, either as to cloaths or money, that is in my power to supply, I will never forgive you. My mamma (if *that* be your objection) need not know any thing of the matter.

Your next letter, I suppose, will be from London. Pray direct it, and your future letters, till further notice, to Mr. Hickman, at his own house. He is intirely devoted to you. Don't take so heavily my mamma's partiality and prejudices. I hope I am past a baby.

Heaven preserve you, and make you as happy as I think you deserve to be, prays

Your ever-affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Wedn. Morn. April 19.

I AM glad, my dear friend, that you approve of my removal to London.

The disagreement between your mamma and you, gives me inexpressible affliction. I hope I think you both more unhappy than you are. But I beseech you let me know the particulars of the debate you call a *very pretty one*. I am well acquainted with your dialect. When you acquaint me with the whole, be your mamma ever so severe upon me, I shall be easier a great deal.—Faulty people should rather deplore the

the occasion, than resent the anger that is but the consequence of their fault.

If I am to be obliged to any body in England for money, it shall be to you. Your mother need not know of your kindness to me, you say—But she *must* know it, if it be done, and if she challenge my beloved friend upon it—For would you either falsify or prevaricate?—I wish your mamma could be made easy on this head.—Forgive me, my dear—But I know—Yet once she had a better opinion of me.—O my inconsiderate rashness!—Excuse me once more, I pray you.—Pride, when it is *native*, will shew itself sometimes, in the midst of mortifications!—But my stomach is down already!



I am unhappy that I cannot have my worthy Hannah!—I am as sorry for the poor creature's illness as for my own disappointment by it. Come, my dear Miss Howe, since you press me to be beholden to you; and would think me proud, if I absolutely refused your favour, pray be so good as to send her two guineas in my name.

If I have nothing for it, as you say, but matrimony, it yields a little comfort, that his relations do not despise the *fugitive*, as persons of their rank and quality-pride might be supposed to do, for having *been* a fugitive.

But O my cruel, thrice cruel uncle! to suppose—But my heart checks my pen, and will not let it proceed, on an intimation so extremely shocking as that which he supposes!—Yet, if thus they have been persuaded, no wonder if they are irreconcilable. This is all my hard-hearted brother's doings—His surmisings!—God forgive him! Prays his injured sister, and

Your ever-obliged and affectionate friend,

CL. H.

LETTER XXXVI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Thursday, April 20.

MR Lovelace's servant is already return'd with an answer from his friend Mr. Doleman, who has taken pains in his inquiries, and is very particular. Mr. Lovelace brought me the letter, as soon as he had read it; and as he now knows, that I acquaint you with every thing that offers, I desired him to let me send it to you for your perusal. Be pleased to return it by the first opportunity. You will see by it, that his friends in town have a notion, that we are actually married.

To ROBERT LOVELACE, *Esq;*

Dear Sir,

Tuesday Night, April 18.

IAM extremely rejoiced to hear, that we shall soon have you in town, after so long an absence. You will be the more welcome still, if what report says be true; which is, that you are actually marry'd to the fair Lady upon whom we have heard you make such encomiums. Mrs. Deleman, and my sister, both wish you joy, if you are, and joy upon your near prospect, if you are not. I have been in town for this week past, to get help, if I could, from my paralytic complaints, and am in a course for them.—Which, nevertheless, did not prevent me from making the desired inquiries. This is the result.

You may have a first floor, well-furnished, at a mercer's in Bedford-street, Covent-garden, with what conveniencies you please for servants: And these either by the quarter or month. The terms according to the conveniencies required.

Mrs.

Mrs. Doleman has seen lodgings in Norfolk-street, and others in Cecil-street ; but tho' the prospects to the Thames and Surry-hills, look inviting from both these streets, yet I suppose they are too near the city.

The owner of those in Norfolk-street would have half the house go together. It would be too much for your description therefore : And I suppose, that you will hardly, when you think fit to declare your marriage, be in lodgings.

Those in Cecil-street are neat and convenient. The owner is a widow of good character ; but she insists, that you take them for a twelvemonth certain.

You may have good accommodations in Dover-street, at a widow's, the relict of an officer in the guards, who dying soon after he had purchased his commission (to which he had a good title by service, and which cost him most part of what he had), she was obliged to let lodgings.

This may possibly be an objection. But she is very careful, she says, that she takes no lodgers, but of figure and reputation. She rents two good houses, distant from each other, only join'd by a large handsome passage. The inner-house is the genteelest, and is very elegantly furnished ; but you may have the use of a very handsome parlour in the outer-house, if you choose to look into the street.

A little garden belongs to the inner-house, in which the old gentlewoman has display'd a true female fancy, and cram'd it with vases, flower-plots, and figures, without number.

As these lodgings seem'd to me the most likely to please you, I was more particular in my enquiries about them. The apartments she has to let are in the inner-house : They are a dining-room, two neat parlours, a withdrawing-room, two or three handsome bed-chambers (one with a pretty light closet in it, which looks into the little garden) ; all furnish'd in taste.

A dignify'd clergyman, his wife, and maiden-daughter, were the last who lived in them. They have but lately quitted them, on his being presented to a considerable church-preferment in Ireland. The gentlewoman says, that he took the lodgings but for three months certain; but liked them and her usage so well, that he continued in them two years; and left them with regret, tho' on so good an account. She bragg'd, that this was the way of all the lodgers she ever had, who staid with her four times as long as they at first intended.

I had some knowlege of the colonel, who was always looked upon as a man of honour. His relict I never saw before. I think she has a masculine air, and is a little forbidding at first: But when I saw her behaviour to two agreeable maiden gentlewomen, her husband's nieces, whom, for *that* reason, she calls *doubly* hers, and heard their praises of *her*, I could impute her very bulk to good humour; since we seldom see your four peevish people plump. She lives very reputably, and is, as I find, aforehand in the world.

If these, or any other of the lodgings I have mentioned, be not altogether to your Lady's mind, she may continue in them the less while, and choose others for herself.

The widow consents, that you should take them for a month only, and *what* of them you please. The terms, she says, she will not fall out upon, when she knows what your Lady expects, and what *her* servants are to do, or *yours* will undertake; for she observed, that servants are generally worse to deal with, than their masters or mistresses.

The Lady may board or not, as she pleases.

As we suppose you marry'd, but that you have reason, from family-differences, to keep it private for the present, I thought it not amiss to hint as much to the widow (but as uncertainty, however), and asked her,

her, if she could, in that case, accommodate you and your servants, as well as the lady and hers? She said, she could; and wish'd by all means, it were to be so; since the circumstance of a person's being single, if not as well recommended as this lady, was one of her usual exceptions.

If none of these lodgings please, you need not doubt very handsome ones in or near Hanover-Square, Soho-Square, Golden-Square, or in some of the new streets about Grosvenor-Square. And Mrs. Doleman, her sister, and myself, most cordially join to offer to your good lady the best accommodations we can make for her at Uxbridge (and also for you, if you are the happy man we wish you to be), till she fits herself more to her mind.

Let me add, that the lodgings at the Mercer's, those in Cecil-street, those at the widow's in Dover-street, any of them, may be enter'd upon at a day's warning.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your sincere and affectionate friend and servant,

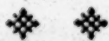
THO. DOLEMAN.

You will easily guess, my dear, when you have read the letter, which lodgings I made choice of. But first to try him, as in so material a point I thought I could not be too circumspect, I seem'd to prefer those in Norfolk-street, for the very reason the writer gives why he thought I would *not*; that is to say, for its neighbourhood to a city so well govern'd as London is said to be. Nor should I have disliked a lodging in the heart of it, having heard but indifferent accounts of the liberties sometimes taken at the other end of the town.—Then seeming to incline to the lodgings in Cecil-street—Then to the Mercer's. But he made no visible preference: And when I asked his opinion of the widow-gentlewoman's, he said, He thought these the most to my taste and convenience:
But

But as he hoped, that I would think lodgings necessary but for a very little while, he knew not which to give his vote for.

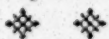
I then fixed upon the widow's; and he has written accordingly to Mr. Doleman, making my compliments to his lady and sister, for their kind offer.

I am to have the dining-room, the bedchamber, with the light closet (of which, if I stay any time at the widow's, I shall make great use), and a servant's room; and we propose to set out on Saturday morning. As for a maid-servant, poor Hannah's illness is a great disappointment to me: But, as he says, I can make the widow satisfaction for one of hers, till I can get one to my mind. And you know, I want not much attendance.



MR. Lovelace has just now, of his own accord, given me five guineas for poor Hannah. I send them inclosed. Be so good as to cause them to be convey'd to her; and to let her know from whom they came.

He has obliged me much by this little mark of his considerateness. Indeed I have the better opinion of him ever since he proposed her return to me.



I HAVE just now *another* instance of his considerateness. He came to me, and said, that, on second thoughts, he could not bear, that I should go up to town without some attendant, were it but for the look of the thing to the widow and her nieces, who, according to his friend's account, lived so genteelly; and especially as I required him to leave me soon after I arrived there; and so would be left alone among strangers. He therefore thought, that I might engage Mrs. Sorlings to lend me one of her two maids, or to let one of her daughters go up with me, and stay till I were provided. And if the latter, the young gentlewoman, no doubt, would be glad of so good an opportunity to see a little of the curiosities of
the

the town, and would be a proper attendant to me on the same occasions.

I told him, as I had done before, that the servants, and the two young gentlewomen, were so equally useful in their way (and servants in a busy farm were so little to be spared), that I should be loth to take them off of their laudable employments. Nor should I think much of diversions for one while; and so the less want an attendant out of doors.

And now, my dear, lest any thing should happen, in so variable a situation as mine, to overcloud my prospects (which at present are more promising than ever yet they have been since I quitted Harlowe-Place), I will snatch the opportunity to subscribe myself

*Your not unhoping,
and ever-obliged friend and servant,*
CL. HARLOWE.

LETTER XXXVII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Thursday, April 20.

HE begins with communicating to him the letter he wrote to Mr. Doleman, to procure suitable lodgings in town, and which he sent away by the Lady's approbation: And then gives him a copy of the answer to it (See p. 184): Upon which he thus expresses himself:

Thou knowest the widow; thou knowest her nieces; thou knowest the lodgings: And didst thou ever read a letter more artfully couch'd, than this of Tom Doleman? Every possible objection anticipated! Every accident provided against!—Every tittle of it plot proof!

Who could forbear smiling, to see my charmer, like a farcical dean and chapter, choose what was before

fore chosen for her; and sagaciously (as they go in form to prayers, that God would direct their choice) pondering upon the different proposals, as if she would make me believe, she has a mind for some other? The dear sly rogue looking upon me, too, with a view to discover some emotion in me, that I can tell her, lay deeper than her eye could reach, tho' it had been a sun-beam.

No confidence in me, fair one! None at all, 'tis plain. Thou wilt not, if I were inclined to change my views, encourage me by a generous reliance on my honour!—And shall it be said, that I, a master of arts in love, shall be overmatch'd by so unpractised a novice?

But to see the charmer so far satisfy'd with my contrivance, as to borrow my friend's letter, in order to satisfy Miss Howe likewise!

Silly little rogues! to walk out into by-paths on the strength of their own judgments!—When nothing but *experience* can teach them how to disappoint us, and learn them grandmother-wisdom! When they have it indeed, then may they sit down, like so many Cassandra's, and preach caution to others; who will as little mind *them*, as they did *their* instructresses, whenever a fine handsome confident fellow, such a one as thou knowest who, comes cross them.

But, Belford, didst thou not mind that sly rogue Doleman's naming Dover-street for the widow's place of abode?—What dost think could be meant by that?—'Tis impossible thou shouldst guess. So, not to puzzle thee about it—Suppose the widow Sinclair's, in Dover-street, should be inquired after by some officious person, in order to come at characters [Miss Howe is as *sly* as the devil, and as *busy* to the full]; and neither such a name, nor such a house, can be found in that street, nor a house to answer the description, then will not the keenest hunter in England be at a fault?

But

But how wilt thou do, methinkst thou askest, to hinder the Lady from resenting the fallacy, and mistrusting thee the more on that account, when she finds it out to be in another street?

Pho! never mind that: Either I shall have a way for it, or we shall thoroughly understand one another by that time; or, if we don't, she'll know enough of me, not to wonder at *such* a peccadillo.

But how wilt thou hinder the Lady from apprising her friend of the real name?

She must first know it herself, monkey, must she not?

Well, but how wilt thou do to hinder her from knowing the street, and her friend from directing letters thither; which will be the same thing, as if the name were known?

Let me alone for that too.

If thou further objectest that Tom Doleman is too great a dunce to write such a letter in answer to mine;—Canst thou not imagine, that in order to save honest Tom all this Trouble, I who know the town so well, could send him a copy of what he should write, and leave him nothing to do, but transcribe?

What now sayst thou to *me*, Belford?

And suppose I had design'd this task of inquiry for thee; and suppose the Lady excepted against thee, for no other reason in the world, but because of my value for thee? What sayst thou to the *Lady*, Jack?

This it is to have leisure upon my hands!—What a matchless plotter thy friend! Stand by, and let me swell!—I am already as big as an elephant; and ten times wiser! mightier too by far!—Have I not reason to snuff the moon, with my proboscis!—Lord help thee for a poor, for a very poor creature!—Wonder not, that I despise thee heartily—Since the man who is disposed immoderately to exalt himself, cannot do it but by despising every-body else in proportion.

I shall

I shall make good use of the *Dolemanic* hint of being marry'd. But I will not tell thee all at once. Nor, indeed, have I thoroughly digested that part of my plot. When a general must regulate himself by the motions of a watchful adversary, how can he say beforehand what he will, or what he will not, do?

Widow SINCLAIR!—Didst thou not say, Lovelace?—

Ay, SINCLAIR, Jack!—Remember the name! SINCLAIR, I repeat. She *has* no other. And her features being broad, and full-blown, I will suppose her to be of Highland extraction; as her husband the colonel [mind that too] was a Scot, as brave as honest.

I never forget the *minutiæ* in my contrivances. In all *doubtable* matters the *minutiæ* closely attended to, and provided for, are of more service than a thousand oaths, vows, and protestations made to supply the neglect of them, and when jealousy has actually got into the working mind.

Thou wouldst wonder if thou knewest one half of my *providences*. To give thee but one, I have already been so good as to send up a list of books to be procured for the Lady's closet, mostly at *second-hand*. And thou knowest, that the women there are all well read. But I will not anticipate—Besides, it looks as if I were afraid of leaving any thing to my old friend CHANCE; which has many a time been an excellent second to me; and ought not to be affronted or despised; especially by one, who has the art of making unpromising incidents turn out in his favour.

L E T T E R XXXVIII.

Miss HOWE, To *Miss* CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Wednesday, April 19.

I Have a piece of intelligence to give you, which concerns you much to know.

Your brother having been assured, that you are not

not married, has taken a resolution to find you out, way-lay you, and carry you off. A friend of his, a captain of a ship, undertakes to get you on ship-board ; and to sail away with you, either by Hull or Leith, in the way to one of your brother's houses.

They are very wicked : For in spite of all your virtues, they conclude you to be *ruin'd*. But if they can be assured, when they have you, that you are not, they will secure you, till they can bring you out Mrs. Solmes : And mean time, in order to give Mr. Lovelace full employment, they talk of a prosecution which will be set up against him, for some crime or other, that they have got a notion of, which they think, if it do not cost him his life, will make him fly his country.

This is very early news. Miss Bell told it in confidence, and with mighty triumph over Lovelace, to Miss Lloyd ; who is at present her favourite ; tho' as much your admirer as ever. Miss Lloyd, being very apprehensive of the mischief which might follow such an attempt, told it to me, with leave to apprize you privately of it—And yet neither she nor I would be sorry, perhaps, if Lovelace were to be fairly hang'd—that is to say, if you my dear, had no objection to it. But we cannot bear, that such an admirable creature should be made the tennis-ball of two violent spirits—Much less, that you should be seized, and exposed to the brutal treatment of wretches who have no bowels.

If you can engage Mr. Lovelace to keep his temper upon it, I think you should acquaint him with it ; but not to mention Miss Lloyd. Perhaps his wicked agent may come at the intelligence, and reveal it to him. But I leave it to your own discretion to do as you think fit in it.—All my concern is, that this daring and foolish project, if carried on, will be a means of throwing you more into his power than ever.—But as it will convince you that there can be no hope

of a reconciliation, I wish you were actually married, let the cause for the prosecution hinted at be what it will, short of murder or a rape.

Your Hannah was very thankful for your kind present. She heaped a thousand blessings upon you for it. She has Mr. Lovelace's too, by this time.

I am pleased with Mr. Hickman, I can tell you:—For he has sent her two guineas by the person who carries Mr. Lovelace's five, as from an unknown hand: Nor am I, or you, to know it. The manner, more than the value, I am pleased with him for. But he does a great many things of this sort; and is as silent as the night; for nobody knows of them, till the gratitude of the benefited will not let them be concealed. He is now and then my almoner, and I believe always adds to my little benefactions.

But his time is not come to be praised for these things; nor does he seem to want *that* encouragement.

The man has certainly a good mind. Nor can we expect in one man every good quality. But he is really a silly fellow, my dear, to trouble his head about me, when he sees how much I despise his whole sex; and must of course make a common man look like a fool, were he not to make *himself* look like one, by wishing to pitch his tent so odly. Our likings, and dislikings, as I have often thought, are seldom governed by prudence, or with a view to happiness. The eye, my dear, the wicked eye—has such a strict alliance with the heart!—And both have such enmity to the understanding!--What an unequal union, the mind and body! All the senses, like the family at Harlowe-place, in a confederacy against that which would animate, and give honour to the whole, were it allow'd its proper precedence.

Permit me, I beseech you, before you go to London, to send you forty-eight guineas.—I mention that
sum

sum to oblige you, because, by accepting back the two to Hannah, I will hold you indebted to me fifty.— Surely this will induce you!—You know that I cannot want the money. I told you, that I have near double that sum; and that the half of it is more than my mamma knows I am mistress of. With so little money as you have, what can you do at such a place as London?—You don't know what occasion you may have for messengers, intelligence, and such-like.—If you don't oblige me, I shall not think your stomach so much down as you say it is; and as, in this one particular, I think it ought to be.

As to the state of things between my mamma and me, you know enough of her temper, not to need to be told, that she never espouses or resents with indifference. Yet will she not remember, that I am *her* daughter. No, truly, I am all my *papa's* girl.

She was very sensible, surely, of the violence of my poor papa's temper, that she can so long remember *that*, when acts of tenderness and affection seem quite forgotten. Some daughters would be tempted to think, that controul sat very heavy upon a mother, who can endeavour to exert the power she has over a child; and regret, for years after death, that she had not the same over a husband.

If this manner of expression becomes not me, of my mother, it will be somewhat extenuated by the love I always bore my father, and by the reverence I shall ever pay to his memory: For he was a fond father, and perhaps would have been as tender a husband, had not my mamma and he been too much of one temper to agree.

The misfortune was, in short, that, when *one* was out of humour, the *other* would be so too: Yet neither of their tempers *comparatively* bad. Notwithstanding all which, I did not imagine, girl as I was, in my papa's life-time, that my mamma's part of the yoke sat so heavy upon her neck, as she gives me

room to think it did, whenever she is pleased to disclaim *her* part of me.

Both parents, as I have often thought, should be very careful if they would secure to themselves the undivided love of their children, that of all things, they should avoid such *durable* contentions with each other, as should distress their children in choosing their party, when they would be glad to reverence both as they ought.

But here is the thing : There is not a better manager of her affairs in the sex, than my mamma ; and I believe a *notable* wife is more impatient of controul, than an *indolent* one. An indolent one, perhaps, thinks she has somewhat to compound for ; while women of the other character, I suppose, know too well their own significance to think highly of that of any-body else. All must be their own way. In one word, because they are *useful*, they will be *more* than useful.

I do assure you, my dear, were I a man, and a man who loved my quiet, I would not have one of these managing wives on any consideration. I would make it a matter of serious inquiry beforehand, whether my mistress's qualifications, if I heard she was notable, were *masculine* or *feminine* ones. If indeed I were an indolent supine mortal, who might be in danger of becoming the property of my steward, I would then perhaps choose to marry for the qualifications of a steward.

But, setting my mamma out of the question, because she *is* my mamma, have I not seen how Lady Hartley pranks up herself above all her sex, because she knows how to manage affairs that do not *belong* to her sex to manage ? Affairs that can do no credit to her, as a woman, to understand ; *practically*, I mean ; for the *theory* of them may not be amiss to be known.

Indeed,

Indeed, my dear, I do not think a *man-woman* a pretty character at all: And as I said, were I a *man*, I would sooner choofe for a dove, tho' it were fit for nothing, but, as the play says, to go tame about house, and breed, than a wife that is setting at work (my insignificant self *present* perhaps) every busy hour my never-resting servants, those of the Stud not excepted; and who with a besom in her hand, as I may say, would be continually filling me with apprehensions, that she wanted to sweep me out of my own house as useless lumber.

Were indeed the mistress of the family, like the wonderful young Lady I so *much* and so *justly* admire, to know how to confine herself within her own respectable rounds of the needle, the pen, the house-keeper's bills, the dairy for her amusement; to see the poor fed from superfluities that *would* otherwise be wasted; and exert herself in all the really useful branches of domestic management; then would she move in her proper sphere; then would she render herself *amiably* useful, and *respectably* necessary; then would she become the *mistress* wheel of the family [Whatever you think of your Anna Howe, I would not have her be the *master*-wheel]; and every-body would love her; as every-body did you, before your insolent brother came back, flush'd with his unmerited acquirements, and turn'd all things topsy-turvy.

If you will be informed of the particulars of our contention, after you have known in general, that your unhappy affair was the subject; why then, I think I must tell you.

Yet how shall I?—I feel my cheek glow with mingled shame and indignation—Know then, my dear—that I have been—as I may say—that I have been *beaten*—Indeed 'tis true.—My mamma thought fit to slap my hands to get from me a sheet of a letter she caught me writing to you; which I tore, because she should not read it, and burnt it before her face.

I know this will trouble you : So spare yourself the labour to tell me it does.

Mr. Hickman came in presently after. I would not see him. I am either too much a woman to be beat, or too much a child to have an humble servant. —So I told my mother. What can one oppose but fullens, when it would be unpardonable so much as to *think* of lifting up a finger!

In the Harlowe-style, she *will* be obey'd, she says : And even Mr. Hickman shall be forbid the house, if he contributes to the carrying on of a correspondence which she will not suffer to be continu'd.

Poor man ! He stands a whimsical chance between us. But he knows he is *sure* of my mamma ; but not of me. 'Tis easy then for him to choose his party, were it not his inclination to serve you, as it surely *is*. And this makes him a merit with me, which otherwise he would not have had ; notwithstanding the good qualities which I have just now acknowledged in his favour. For, my dear, let my faults in other respects be what they may, I will pretend to say, that I have in my own mind those qualities which I praised him for. And if we are to come together, I could for that reason better dispense with them in him. —So if a husband, who has a bountiful-temper'd wife, is not a niggard, nor seeks to restrain her, but has an opinion of all she does, that is enough for him : As, on the contrary, if a bountiful-temper'd husband has a frugal wife, it is best for both. For one to give, and t'other to give, except they have the prudence, and are at so good an understanding with each other, as to compare notes, they may perhaps put it out of their power to be just. Good frugal doctrine, my dear ! —But this way of putting it, is middling the matter between what I have learnt of my mamma's over-prudent, and your enlarged, notions. — But from doctrine to fact. —

I shut

I shut myself up all that day ; and what little I did eat, eat alone. But at night she sent up Kitty, with a command, upon my obedience, to attend her at supper.

I went down : But most gloriously in the fullens. YES, and NO, were great words with me, to every thing she asked of me, for a good while.

That behaviour, she told me, should not do for her.

Beating should not with me, I said.

My bold resistance, she told me, had provoked her to slap my hand ; and she was sorry to have been so provok'd. But again insisted, that I would either give up my correspondence absolutely, or let her see all that passed in it.

I must not do either, I told her. It was unsuitable both to my inclination and to my honour, at the instigation of base minds, to give up a friend in distress.

She rung all the maternal changes upon the words duty, obedience, filial obligation, and so forth.

I told her that a duty too rigorously and unreasonably exacted, had been your ruin, if you were ruin'd. If I were of age to be marry'd, I hope she would think me capable of *making*, or at least of *keeping*, my own friendships ; such a one especially as this, with a young Lady, whose friendship she herself, till this distressful point of time, had thought the most useful and edifying, that I ever had contracted.

The greater the merit, the worse the action : The finer the talents, the more dangerous the example.

There were other duties, I said, besides that of a child to a parent ; and I hoped I need not give up a suffering friend, especially at the instigation of those by whom she suffered. I told her, that it was very hard to annex such a condition as that to my duty ; when I was persuaded, that both duties might be performed, without derogating from either : That an unreasonable command [She must excuse me, I must say

say it, tho' I were slapt again] was a degree of tyranny : And I could not have expected, that at these years I should be allow'd no will, no choice of my own; where a woman only was concern'd, and the devilish sex not in the question.

What turn'd most in favour of her argument was, that I desired to be excused from letting her read all that passes between us. She insisted much upon this: And since, she said, you were in the hands of the most intriguing man in the world; and a man, who had made a jest of her favourite Hickman, as she has been told; she knows not what consequences, unthought of by you or me, may flow from such a correspondence.

So you see, my dear, that I fear the worse on Mr. Hickman's account! My mamma *might* see all that passes between us, did I not know, that it would cramp your spirit, and restrain the freedom of your pen, as it would also the freedom of my own: And were she not moreover so firmly attached to the contrary side, that inferences, consequences, strained deductions, censures, and constructions the most partial, would for ever be hawled in to tease me, and would perpetually subject us to the necessity of debating and canvassing.

Besides, I don't choose that she should know how much this artful wretch has outwitted, as I may call it, a lady so much his superior.

The generosity of your heart, and the greatness of your mind (a mind above selfish considerations) full well I know; but do not offer to dissuade me from this correspondence.

Mr. Hickman, immediately on the contention above, offer'd his service; and I accepted of it, as you'll see by my last. He thinks, tho' he has all honour for my mamma, that she is unkind to us both. He was pleased to tell me (with an air, as I thought), that he not only *approv'd* of our correspondence, but
admires

admires the steadiness of my friendship; and having no opinion of your man, but a great one of me, thinks that my advice or intelligence, from time to time, may be of use to you; and, on this presumption, said, that it would be a thousand pities, that you should suffer for want of either.

Mr. Hickman pleased me in the main by his speech; and it is well the general tenor of it was agreeable:—Otherwise, I can tell him, I should have reckon'd with him for his word *approve*; for it is a style I have not yet permitted him to talk to me in:—And you see, my dear, what these men are:—No sooner do they find that you have favour'd them with the power of doing you an agreeable service, but they take upon them to *approve*, forsooth, of your actions!—By which is implied a right to *disapprove*, if they think fit.

I have told my mamma how much you wish to be reconciled to your relations, and how independent you are on Mr. Lovelace.

Mark the end of the latter assertion, she says.—And as to reconciliation, she knows, nothing will do, and will have it, that nothing *ought* to do, but your returning back, without presuming to condition with them. And this if you do, she says, will best shew your independence on Lovelace.

You see, my dear, what your duty is, in my mamma's opinion.

I suppose your next, directed to Mr. Hickman, at his own house, will be from London.

Heaven preserve you in honour and safety, is my prayer.

What you do for change of cloaths, I cannot imagine.

It is amazing to me, what your relations can mean by distressing you as they seem resolved to do. I see they will throw you into his arms, whether you will or not.

I send

I send this by Robert, for dispatch sake : And can only repeat the hitherto rejected offer of my best services ! Adieu, my dearest friend. Believe me ever

Your affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XXXIX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Thursday, April 20.

I Should think myself utterly unworthy of your friendship, did my own concerns, heavy as they are, so ingross me, that I could not find leisure for a few lines, to declare to my beloved friend my sincere disapprobation of her conduct, in an instance where she is so *generously* faulty, that the consciousness of that very generosity may hide from her the fault, which I, more than any other, have reason to deplore, as being the unhappy occasion of it.

You know, you say, that your account of the contentions between your mamma and you will trouble me ; and so you bid me spare myself the labour to tell you that they do.

You did not use, my dear, to forbid me thus *before-hand*. You was wont to say, you loved me the better for my expostulations with you on that acknowledged warmth and quickness of your temper, which your own good sense taught you to be apprehensive of. What tho' I have so miserably fallen, and am unhappy ; if ever I had any judgment worth regarding, it is now as much worth as ever, because I can give it as freely against myself, as against any-body else. And shall I not, when there seems to be an infection in my fault, and that it leads you likewise to resolve to carry on a correspondence against prohibition, expostulate with you upon it ; when whatever consequences flow from your disobedience, but widen
my

my error, which is as the evil root, from which such bad branches spring?

The mind that can glory in being capable of so noble, so firm, so unshaken a friendship, as that of my dear Miss Howe; a friendship which no casualty or distress can lessen, but which increases with the misfortunes of its friend—Such a mind must be above taking amiss the well-meant admonitions of that distinguish'd friend. I will not therefore apologize for my freedom on this subject, : And the less need I, when that freedom is the result of an affection, in the very instance, so *absolutely* disinterested, that it tends to deprive myself of the only comfort left me.

Your acknowledged fullens; your tearing from your mamma's hands the letter she thought she had a right to see; and burning it, as you own, before her face; your refusal to see the man, who is so willing to obey you for the sake of your unhappy friend; and this purely to vex your mamma; can you think, my dear, upon this brief recapitulation of hardly one half of the faulty particulars you give, that these faults are excusable in one, who so well knows her duty?

Your mamma had a good opinion of me once: Is not that a reason why she should be more regarded now, when I have, as she believes, so deservedly forfeited it? A prejudice in favour is as hard to be totally overcome, as a prejudice in disfavour. In what a strong light, then, must that error appear to her, that should so totally turn her heart against me, herself not a principal in the case?

There are other duties, you say, besides that of a child to a parent: But that must be a prior duty to all other duties; a duty anterior, as I may say, to your very birth: And what duty ought not to give way to That, when they come in competition?

You are persuaded, that both duties may be performed without derogating from either. *She* thinks otherwise. What is the conclusion to be drawn from these premises?

When

When your mamma sees, how much I suffer in my reputation from the step I have taken, from whom she and all the world expected better things, how much reason has she to be watchful over you ! One evil draws another after it ; and how knows she, or any body, where it may stop ?

Does not the person who will vindicate, or seek to extenuate, a faulty step in another [In this light must your mamma look upon the matter in question between you], give an indication either of a culpable will, or a weak judgment ?—And may not she apprehend, that the censorious will think, that such a one might probably have equally failed, under the same *inducements* and *provocations*, to *use your own words* in a former letter, apply'd to me ?

Can there be a stronger instance in human life than mine has so early furnished within a few months past (not to mention the uncommon provocations to it, which I have met with), of the necessity of the continuance of a watchful parent's care over a daughter ; let that daughter have obtained ever so great a reputation for her prudence ?

Is not the space from sixteen to twenty-one, that which requires this care, more than any time of a young woman's life ? For in that period, do we not generally attract the eyes of the other sex, and become the subject of their addresses, and not seldom of their attempts ? And is not That the period in which our conduct or misconduct gives us a reputation or disreputation, that almost inseparably accompanies us throughout our whole future lives ?

Are we not then most in danger from ourselves, because of the distinction with which we are apt to behold particulars of that sex ?

And when our dangers multiply, both from *within* and *without*, do not our parents know, that their vigilance ought to be doubled ?—And shall that necessary

fary increafe of care fit uneasy upon us, because we are grown up to stature and womanhood?

Will you tell me, if so, what is the precise stature and age, at which a good child shall conclude herself absolv'd from the duty she owes to a parent?—And at which a parent, after the example of the dams of the brute creation, is to lay aside all care and tenderness for her offspring?

Is it so hard for you, my dear, to be treated like a child? And can you not think it is hard, for a good parent to imagine herself under the unhappy necessity of so treating her woman-grown daughter?

Do you think, if your mamma had been *you*, and you your *mamma*, and *your* daughter had struggled with you, as you did with her, that you would not have been as apt, as your mamma was, to have slappt your daughter's hands, to have made her quit her hold to you, and give up the prohibited paper?

It is a great truth, that your mamma told you, that you *provoked* her to this harshness; and a great condescension in her (and not taken notice of by you, as it deserv'd) to say, that she was *sorry for it*.

At *every* age on this side matrimony (for then we come under another sort of protection, tho' that is far from abrogating the filial duty), it will be found, that the wings of our parents are our most necessary and most effectual safeguard, to preserve us from the vultures, the hawks, the kites, and the other villainous birds of prey, that hover over us, with a view to seize and destroy us, the first time we are caught wandering out of the eye or care of our watchful and natural guardians and protectors.

Hard as you may suppose it to be deny'd the *continuance* of a correspondence once so much approved, even by the reverend denier;—Yet, if your mamma think that my fault is of such a nature, as that a correspondence with me will cast a shade upon your reputation; all my own friends having given me up;

—that hardship is to be submitted to. And must it not make her the more strenuous to support her own opinion, when she sees the first fruits of this tenaciousness of your side, is to be *gloriously in the fullens*, as you call it ; and in a disobedient opposition ?

I know, my dear, you mean an humorousness in that expression, which, in most cases, gives a delightful poignancy, both to your conversation and correspondence—But indeed, my dear, *this* case will not bear it.

Will you give me leave to add to this tedious expostulation, that I by no means approve of some of the things you write, in relation to the manner in which your father and mother lived ?—at times—Only at times, I dare say ; tho' perhaps too often.—

Your mamma is answerable to *any-body*, rather than to her *child*, for whatever was wrong in her conduct, if any thing *was* wrong, towards Mr. Howe ; a gentleman, of whose memory I will only say, that it *ought* to be revered by you—But yet, should you not examine yourself, whether your displeasure at your mamma had no part in your revived reverence for your papa, at the time you wrote ?

No one is perfect : And altho' your mamma may not be so right to remember disagreeablenesses against the departed, yet should you not want to be reminded, on *whose* account, and on *what* occasion, she remembered them.—You cannot judge, nor ought you to attempt to judge, of what might have passed between both, to keep awake, and imbitter disagreeable remembrances in the survivor.

L E T T E R XL.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE ; *In Continuation.*

BUT this subject must not be pursued. Another might, with more pleasure (tho' not with more approbation) upon one of your lively excursions.

sions. It is upon the high airs you give yourself upon the word *approve*.

How comes it about, I wonder, that a young lady so noted for a predominating generosity, should not be uniformly generous? — That your generosity should fail in an instance, where policy, prudence, gratitude, would not permit it to fail? Mr. Hickman (as you confess) has indeed a worthy mind. If I had not long ago known that, he would never have found an advocate in me for the favour of my Anna Howe. Often and often have I been concerned, when I was your happy guest, to see him, after a conversation in which he had well-supported his part in your absence, sink at once into silence the moment you came into company.

I have told you of this before: And I believe I hinted to you once, that the superciliousness you put on *only* to him, was capable of a construction, which at the time would have very little gratify'd your pride to have had made; since it was as much in his favour, as in your own disfavour.

Mr. Hickman, my dear, is a *modest* man. I never see a modest man, but I am sure (if he has not wanted opportunities) that he has a treasure in his mind, which requires nothing but the key of encouragement to unlock it, to make him shine: While a confident man, who, to *be* confident, must think as meanly of his company, as highly of himself, enters with magisterial airs upon any subject; and depending upon his assurance to bring himself off when found out, talks of more than he is master of.

But a *modest* man! — O my dear, shall not a modest woman distinguish and wish to consort with a modest man? — A man, *before* whom, and *to* whom, she may open her lips secure of his good opinion of all she says, and of his just and polite regard for her judgment? and who must therefore inspire her with an agreeable confidence.

What a lot have I drawn!—We are all apt to turn teachers.—But, surely, I am better enabled to talk, to write, upon these subjects, than ever I was!—But I will banish *myself*, if possible, from an address which, when I began to write, I was determin'd to confine wholly to your own particular.

My dearest, dearest friend, how ready are you to tell us what others should do, and even what a mother should have done! But indeed you once, I remember, advanced, that, as different attainments required different talents to master them, so, in the writing way, a person might not be a bad critic upon the works of others, altho' he might himself be unable to write with excellence. But will you permit me to account for all this readiness of finding fault, by placing it to human nature, which, being sensible of the defects of human nature (that is to say, of its *own* defects), loves to be *correcting*? But in exercising that talent, chooses rather to turn its eye *outward* than *inward*?—In other words, to employ itself rather in the *outward* search, than in the *in-door* examination?

And here give me leave to add (and yet it is with tender reluctance) that altho' you say very pretty things of notable wives; and altho' I join with you in opinion, that husbands may have as many inconveniencies to encounter *with*, as conveniencies to boast *of*, from women of that character; yet Lady Hartley, perhaps, would have had milder treatment from your pen, had it not been dipt in gall, with a mother in your eye.

L E T T E R XLI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE; In Continuation.

AND now, my dear, a few words, as to the prohibition laid upon you; a subject, that I have frequently touched upon, but cursorily; because I
was

was afraid to trust myself with it, knowing that my judgment, if I did, would condemn my practice.

You command me not to attempt to dissuade you from this correspondence; and you tell me how kindly Mr. Hickman approves of it; and how obliging he is to me, to permit it to be carry'd on under cover to him:—But this does not quite satisfy me.

I am a very bad casuist; and the pleasure I take in writing to you, who are the only one to whom I can disburden my mind, may make me, as I have hinted, very partial to my own wishes:—Else, if it were not an artful evasion beneath an open and frank heart to wish to be comply'd with, I would be glad methinks to be permitted still to write to you; and only have such occasional returns by Mr. Hickman's pen, as well as cover, as might set me right when I am wrong; confirm me when right; and guide me where I doubt. This would enable me to proceed in the difficult path before me, with more assuredness. For whatever I suffer from the censures of others, if I can preserve your good opinion, I shall not be altogether unhappy, let what will befall me.

And indeed, my dear, I know not how to forbear writing. I have now no other employment or diversion. And I must write on, altho' I were not to send it to any-body. You have often heard me own the advantages I have found from writing down every thing of moment that befalls me; and of all I *think*, and of all I *do*, that may be of future use to me:—For, besides that this helps to form one to a style, and opens and expands the ductile mind; every one will find, that many a good thought evaporates in thinking; many a good resolution goes off, driven out of memory, perhaps, by some other, not so good. But when I set down what I *will* do, or what I have done, on this or that occasion; the resolution or action is before me, either to be adhered to, withdrawn, or amended; and I have entered into *compact* with myself,

self, as I may say; having given it under my own hand, to *improve* rather than go *backward*, as I live longer.

I would willingly therefore write to *you*, if I *might*; the rather as it would be more inspiriting to have some end in view in what I write; some friend to please; besides merely seeking to gratify my passion for scribbling.

But why, if your mamma will permit our correspondence on communicating to her all that passes in it, and if she will condescend to one only condition, may it not be comply'd with?

Would she not, do you think, my dear, be prevailed upon to have the communication made to her *in confidence*?

If there were any prospect of a reconciliation with my friends, I should not have so much regard for my *pride*, as to be afraid of *any-body's* knowing how much I have been *outwitted*, as you call it. I would in *that* case (when I had left Mr. Lovelace) acquaint your mamma, and all my own friends, with the whole of my story. It would behove me so to do, for my own reputation, and for their satisfaction.

But if I have no such prospect, what will the communication of my reluctance to go away with Mr. Lovelace, and of his arts to frighten me away, avail me?—Your mamma has hinted, that my friends would insist upon my returning to them (as a proof of the truth of my plea) to be disposed of, without condition, at their pleasure. If I scrupled this, my brother would rather triumph over me, than keep my secret.—Mr. Lovelace, whose pride already so ill brooks my regrets for meeting him (when he thinks, if I had not, I must have been Mr. Solmes's wife) would perhaps treat me with indignity:—And thus, deprived of all refuge and protection, I should become the scoff of men of intrigue; and be thought a greater disgrace than ever to my sex:—Since Love,
and

and consequential marriage, will find more excuses, than perhaps *ought* to be found, for actions premeditatedly rash.

But if your mamma will receive the communications in confidence, pray shew her all that I have written, or shall write. If my past conduct deserves not *heavy* blame, I shall then perhaps have the benefit of her advice, as well as yours. And if I shall wilfully deserve blame for the time to come, I will be contented to be deny'd yours as well as hers for ever.

As to cramping my spirit, as you call it (were I to sit down to write what I know your mamma must see), that, my dear, is already cramped. And do not think so unhandsomely of your mamma, as to fear that she would make *partial* constructions against me. Neither you nor I can doubt, but that, had she been left unprepossessedly to herself, she would have shewn favour to me. And so, I dare say, would my uncle Antony.—Nay, my dear, I can extend my charity still farther: For I am sometimes of opinion, that were my brother and sister absolutely certain, that they had ruin'd me beyond recovery in the opinion of both my uncles, so far, as that they need not be apprehensive of my clashing with their interests; they would not oppose a pardon, altho' they might not wish a reconciliation—Especially if I would make a few sacrifices to them:—Which, I assure you, I should be inclined to make, were I wholly free, and independent of this man.—You know I never valued myself upon worldly acquisitions, nor upon my grandfather's bequests, but as they enlarged my power to do things I loved to do. And if I were deny'd the power, I must, as I now do, curb my inclinations.

Do not, however, think me guilty of an affectation in what I have said of my brother and sister. Severe enough I am sure it is, in the most favourable sense. And an indifferent person will be of opinion, that they are much better warranted than ever, for the sake of
the

the family-honour, to seek to ruin me in the favour of all my friends.

But to the former topic—Try, my dear, if your mamma will, upon the condition above-given, permit our correspondence, on seeing all we write. But if she will not, what a selfishness would there be in my love to you, were I to wish you to forego your duty for my sake?

And now, one word, as to the freedom I have treated you with in this tedious expostulatory address. I presume upon your forgiveness of it, because few friendships are founded on such a basis as ours:—Which is, ‘freely to *give* reproof, and thankfully to *receive* it, as occasions arise; that so either may have opportunity to clear up mistakes, to acknowledge and amend errors, as well in behaviour, as in words and deeds; and to rectify and confirm each other in the judgment each shall form upon persons, things, and circumstances.’ And all this upon the following consideration; ‘That it is much more eligible, as well as honourable, to be corrected with the gentleness of an undoubted friend, than by continuing either blind or wilful, to expose ourselves to the censures of an envious, and perhaps malignant world.’

But it is as needless, I dare say, to remind you of this, as it is to repeat my request, that you will not, in your turn, spare the follies and the faults of

Your ever-affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Subjoined to the above.

I said, that I would avoid writing any thing of my own particular affairs in the above address, if I could.

I will write one letter more, to inform you how we stand. But, my dear, you must permit that one (which will require your advice) and your answer to it, and the copy of one I have written to my aunt, to be

be the last that shall pass between us, while the prohibition continues.

I fear, I very much fear, that my unhappy situation will draw me in to be guilty of evasion, of little affectations, and of curvings from the plain simple truth, which I was wont to value myself upon. But allow me to say, and this for your sake, and in order to lessen your mother's fears, of any ill consequences that she might apprehend from our correspondence, that if I am at any time guilty of a failure in these respects, I will not go on in it: But repent, and seek to recover my lost ground, that I may not bring error into habit.

I have deferr'd going to town, at Mrs. Sorlings's earnest request. But have fixed my removal to Monday, as I shall acquaint you in my next. I have already made a progress in that next; but, having an unexpected opportunity, will send this by itself.

L E T T E R XLII.

Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Friday Morning, April 21.

MY mamma will not comply with your condition, my dear. I hinted it to her, as from myself.—But the *Harlowes* [Excuse me] have got her intirely in with them. It is a scheme of mine, she told me, to draw her into your party, against your parents.—Which for her own sake, she is very careful about.

Don't be so much concern'd about my mamma and me, once more, I beg of you. We shall do well enough together: Now a falling-out, now a falling-in. It used to be so, when you were not in the question.

Yet I do give you my sincere thanks for every line of your reprehensive letters; which I intend to read as often as I find my temper rises.

I will

I will freely own, that I winced a little at first reading them. But I see, that in every reproof, I shall love and honour you still more, if possible, than before.

Yet, I think, I have one advantage over you; and which, I will hold thro' this letter, and thro' all my future letters; that is, that I will treat you as freely as you treat me; and yet will never think an apology necessary to you for my freedom.

But this is the effect of your gentleness of temper; with a little sketch of imply'd reflection on the warmth of mine.—Gentleness in a woman you hold to be no fault—Nor do I, a little due or provoked warmth—But what is this, but praising, on both sides, what neither of us can help; nor perhaps wish to help? You can no more go out of your road, than I can go out of mine. It would be a pain to either to do so:—What then is it in either's approving of her own natural byas, but making a virtue of necessity?

But one observation I will add, that were *your* character, and *my* character, to be truly drawn, mine would be allowed to be the most natural. Shades and lights are equally necessary in a fine picture. Yours would be surrounded with such a flood of brightness, with such a glory, that it would indeed dazzle; but leave one heartless to imitate it.

O may you not suffer from a base world for your gentleness; while my temper, by its warmth keeping all imposition at distance, tho' less amiable in general, affords me not reason, as I have mentioned heretofore, to wish to make an exchange with you!

I should indeed be inexcusable to open my lips by way of contradiction to my mamma, had I such a fine spirit as yours to deal with—Truth is truth, my dear!—Why should narrowness run away with the praises due to a noble expansion of heart?—If every-body would speak out, as I do [that is to say, give praise where only praise is due; dispraise where due, like-
wife],

wife], *shame*, if not *principle*, would mend the world—Nay shame would introduce principle in a generation or two.—Very true, my dear—Do you apply—I dare not—For I *fear* you, almost as much as I *love* you.

I will give you an instance, nevertheless, which will anew demonstrate, that none but very generous and noble-minded people ought to be implicitly obey'd. You know what I said above, that *truth* is *truth*.

Inconveniencies will sometimes arise from having to do with persons of modesty and scrupulousness. Mr. Hickman, you say, is a *modest* man. He put your corrective packet into my hand with a very fine bow, and a self-satisfy'd air. [We'll consider what you say of this honest man by-and-by, my dear]. His strut was not gone off, when in came my mamma, as I was reading it.

When some folks find their anger has made them considerable, they will be always angry, or seeking occasions for anger.

Why, now, Mr. Hickman!—Why, now, Nancy, as I was putting the packet into my bosom at her entrance—You have a letter brought you this instant—While the *modest* man, with his pausing brayings, Mad-da—Mad-dam, looked as if he knew not whether he had best to run, and leave me and my mamma to fight it out, or to stand his ground, and see fair play.

It would have been poor to tell a lye for it.---She flung away. I went out at the opposite door, to read it; leaving Mr. Hickman to exercise his white teeth upon his thumb-nails.

When I had read your letters, I went to find out my mamma. I told her the generous contents, and that you desired that the prohibition might be adhered to.---I proposed your condition, as from myself; and was rejected, as above.

She

She supposed, she was finely painted between two young creatures, who had more wit than prudence. And instead of being prevailed upon by the generosity of your sentiments, made use of your opinion only to confirm her own, and renewed her prohibitions, charging me to return no other answer, but that she *did* renew them. Adding, that they should stand, till your relations were reconciled to you; hinting, as if she had *engaged for as much*; and expected my compliance.

I thought of your reprehensions, and was *meek*, tho' not pleased. And let me tell you, my dear, that as long as I can satisfy my own mind, that good is intended, and that it is hardly possible that evil should ensue from our correspondence; as long as I know, that this prohibition proceeds originally from the same spiteful minds, which have been the occasion of all these mischiefs; as long as I know, that it is not your fault, if your relations are not reconciled to you; and that upon conditions which no reasonable people would refuse---You must give me leave, with all deference to your judgment, and to your excellent lessons [which would reach almost every other case of this kind, but the present], to insist upon your writing to me, and that minutely, as if this prohibition had not been laid.

It is not from humour, from perverseness, that I insist upon this. I cannot express how much my heart is in your concerns. And you must, in short, allow me to think, that if I can do you service by writing, I shall be better justify'd by *continuing* to write, than my mamma is by her prohibition.

But yet, to satisfy you all I can, I will as seldom return answers, while the interdict lasts, as may be consistent with my notions of friendship, and the service I owe you, and can do you.

As to your expedient of writing by Hickman [And now, my dear, your modest man comes in: And as
you

you love modesty in that sex, I will do my endeavour, by a proper distance, to keep him in your favour] I know what you mean by it, my sweet friend. It is to make that man significant with me. As to the correspondence, THAT *shall* go on, I do assure you, be as scrupulous as you please—So that *that* will not suffer, if I do not close with your proposal as to him.

I think, I must tell you, that it will be honour enough for him to have his name made use of so frequently betwixt us. This, of itself, is placing a confidence in him, that will make him walk bolt upright, and display his white hand, and his fine diamond ring; and most mightily lay down his services, *and* his pride to oblige, *and* his diligence, *and* his fidelity, *and* his contrivances, to keep our secret; *and* his excuses, *and* his evasions to my mamma, when challenged by her; with fifty *and's* beside. And will it not moreover give him pretence and excuse oftner than ever to pad-nag it hither to good Mrs. Howe's fair daughter?

But to admit him into my company tête à tête, and into my closet, as often as I would wish to write to you; I only dictate to *his* pen—my mamma all the time supposing that I was going to be heartily in love with him—To make him master of my sentiments, and of my *heart*, as I may say, when I write to you—Indeed, my dear, I won't. Nor, were I married to the best HE in England, would I honour him with the communication of my correspondences.

No, my dear, it is sufficient, surely, for him to parade it in the character of our letter-conveyer, and to be honour'd in a cover. And never fear but, modest as you think him, he will make enough of that.

You are always blaming me for want of generosity to this man, and for abuse of power. But I profess, my dear, I cannot tell how to help it. Do, dear, now, let me spread my plumes a little, and now-and-

then make myself feared. This is my time, you know, since it will be no more to *my* credit, than to *his*, to give myself those airs when I am married. He has a joy when I am pleased with him, that he would not know, but for the pain my displeasure gives him.

This, I am satisfy'd, will be the consequence, if I do not make him quake now-and-then, he will endeavour to make me fear. All the animals in the creation are more or less in a state of hostility with each other. The wolf, that runs away from a lion, will devour a lamb the next moment. I remember, that I was once so enraged at a game-chicken that was continually pecking at another (a poor humble one, as I thought him), that I had the offender caught, and without more ado, in a pet of humanity, wrung his neck off. What follow'd this execution?—Why that other grew insolent, as soon as *his* insulter was gone, and was continually pecking at one or two under *him*. Peck and be hang'd, said I—I might as well have preserv'd the first; for I see it is the *nature of the beast*.

Excuse my flippancies. I wish I were with you. I would make you smile in the midst of your gravest airs, as I used to do.—O that you had accepted of my offer to attend you!—But nothing that I offer, will you accept—Take care! you will make me very angry with you: And when I am, you know I value nobody.—For, dearly as I love you, I must be, and cannot always help it,

Your saucy

ANNA HOWE.

L E T T E R XLIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Friday, April 21.

MR. Lovelace communicated to me this morning early from his intelligencer, the news of my brother's scheme. I like him the better for making
very

very light of it; and for his treating it with contempt. And indeed, had I not had the hint of it from you, I should have suspected it to be some contrivance of his, in order to hasten me to town, where he has long wished to be himself.

He read me the passage in that Leman's letter, pretty much to the effect of what you wrote to me from Miss Lloyd; with this addition, that one Singleton, a master of a Scots vessel, is the man, who is to be the principal in this act of violence.

I have seen him. He has been twice entertained at Harlowe-Place, as my brother's friend. He has the air of a very bold and fearless man; and I fancy it must be his project; as my brother, I suppose, talks to every-body of the rash step I have taken; having not spared me before he had this seeming reason to censure me.

This Singleton lives at Leith; so, perhaps, I am to be carried to my brother's house not far from that port.

Putting these passages together, I am not a little apprehensive, that the design, lightly as Mr. Lovelace, from his fearless temper, treats it, may be attempted to be carried into execution; and of the consequences that may attend it, if it be.

I asked Mr. Lovelace, seeing him so frank and cool, what he would advise me to do?

Shall I *ask* you, Madam, what are your own thoughts?—Why I return the question, said he, is, because you have been so very earnest that I should leave you, as soon as you are in London, that I know not what to propose, without offending you.

My opinion is, said I, that I should studiously conceal myself from the knowledge of every-body but Miss Howe; and that you should leave me out of hand; since they will certainly conclude, that where *one* is, the *other* is not far off: And it is easier to trace *you* than *me*.

You would not surely wish, said he, to fall into your brother's hands by such a violent measure as this?—I propose not to throw myself officiously in their way; but should they have reason to think I avoided them, would not that whet their diligence to find you, and their courage to attempt to carry you off; and subject me to insults that no man of spirit can bear?

Lord bless me! said I, to what has this one fatal step that I have been betray'd into—

Dearest Madam! Let me beseech you to forbear this harsh Language, when you see, by this new scheme, how determin'd they were upon carrying their old ones, had you not been *betray'd*, as you call it! Have I offer'd to defy the laws of society, as this brother of yours must do, if any thing be intended by this project?—I hope you will be pleased to observe, that there are as violent and as wicked enterprizers as myself—But this is so very wild a project, that I think there can be no room for apprehensions from it.—I know your brother well. When at College, he had always a romantic turn. But never had a head for any thing but to puzzle and confound himself: A half invention, and a whole conceit, and without any talents to do himself good, or others harm, but as those others gave him the power by their own folly, built upon his presumption.

This is very volubly run off, Sir!—But violent spirits are but too much alike; at least in their methods of resenting. You will not presume to make yourself a less innocent man surely, who had determin'd to brave my whole family in person, if my folly had not saved *you* the rashness, and *them* the insult—

Dear Madam!—Still must it be *folly*, *rashness*!—It is as impossible for you to think tolerably of anybody *out* of your own family, as it is for any one *in* it to deserve your love!—Forgive me, dearest creature!—If I did not love you as no man ever loved a woman,

woman, I might appear more indifferent to preferences so undeservedly made.—But let me ask you, madam, What have you borne from *me*?—What cause have I given you to treat me with so much severity, and so little confidence?—And what have you not borne from *them*?—My general character may have been against me: But what of your own knowledge have you against me?

I was startled. But I was resolved not to desert myself.

Is this a time, Mr. Lovelace, is this a proper occasion, to give yourself these high airs to me, a young creature destitute of protection?—It is a surprizing question you ask me. Had I aught against you of my own knowledge—I can tell you, Sir—And away I would have flung.

He snatched my hand, and besought me not to leave him in displeasure.—He pleaded his passion for me, and my severity to him, and partiality for those from whom I had suffered so much; and whose intended violence, he said, was now the subject of our deliberation.

I was forced to hear him.

You condescended, dearest creature, said he, to ask my advice.—It is very easy, give me leave to say, to advise you what to do. I hope I may, on this *new* occasion, speak without offence, notwithstanding your former injunctions.—You see that there can be no hope of reconciliation with your relations.—Can you, Madam, consent to honour with your hand, a wretch whom you have never yet obliged with one *voluntary* favour?—

What a recriminating, what a reproachful way, my dear, was this, of putting a question of this nature!—

I expected not from him, at the time, either the question or the manner— I am ashamed to recollect the confusion I was thrown into;—all your advice in

my head at the moment : Yet his words so prohibitory. He confidently seemed to enjoy my confusion [Indeed, my dear, he knows not what respectful love is !] ; and gaz'd upon me, as if he would have looked me through.

He was still more declarative afterwards indeed, as I shall mention by-and-by : But it was half-extorted from him.

My heart struggled violently between resentment and shame to be thus teased by one, who seemed to have all *his* passions at command, at a time when I had very little over *mine* ; till at last I burst into tears, and was going from him in high disgust ; when, throwing his arms about me, with an air, however, the most tenderly respectful, he gave a *stupid* turn to the subject.

It was far from his heart, he said, to take so much advantage of the straight, which the discovery of my brother's foolish project had brought me into, as to renew, without my permission, a proposal which I had hitherto discountenanced ; and which for that reason—

And then he came with his half-sentences, apologizing for what he had hardly half-proposed.

Surely, he had not the insolence to *intend* to tease me, to see if I could be brought to speak what became me not to speak—But, whether he had or not, it *did* tease me ; insomuch that my very heart was fretted, and I broke out at last into fresh tears, and a declaration, that I was very unhappy. And just then recollecting how like a tame fool I stood, with his arms about me, I flung from him with indignation. But he seized my hand, as I was going out of the room, and upon his knees besought my stay for one moment : And then tendered himself, in words the most clear and explicit, to my acceptance, as the most effectual means to disappoint my brother's scheme, and set all right.

But

But what could I say to this?—Extorted from him, as it seem'd to me, rather as the effect of his compassion, than of his love; What *could* I say?—I paused, I looked silly! I am *sure* I looked very silly. He suffered me to pause, and look silly; waiting for me to say something: And at last, ashamed of my confusion, and aiming to make an excuse for it, I told him, that I desired he would avoid such measures, as might add to an uneasiness which was so visible upon reflecting on the irreconcilableness, of my friends, and what unhappy consequences might follow from this unaccountable project of my brother.

He promised to be governed by me in every thing. And again the wretch asked me, If I forgave him for the humble suit he had made to me? What had I to do, but to try for a palliation of my confusion, since it serv'd me not?

I told him, I had hopes it would not be long before Mr. Morden arrived; and doubted not, that he would be the readier to engage in my favour, when he found, that I made no other use of *his*, Mr. Lovelace's, assistance, than to free myself from the addresses of a man so disagreeable to me as Mr. Solmes: I must therefore wish, that every thing might remain as it was, till I could hear from my cousin.

This, altho' teased by him as I was, was not a denial, you see, my dear. But he must throw himself into a heat, rather than try to persuade; which any other man, in his situation, I should think, would have done: And this warmth obliged me to adhere to my seeming negative.

This was what he said, with a vehemence that must harden any woman's mind, who had a spirit above being frighted into passiveness:

Good God!—And will you, Madam, still resolve to shew me, that I am to hope for no share in your favour, while any the remotest prospect remains, that
you

you will be received by my bitterest enemies, at the price of my utter rejection?

This was what I return'd, with warmth, and with a salving art *too*—You have seen, Mr. Lovelace, how much my brother's violence can affect me: But you will be mistaken, if you let loose yours upon me, with a thought of terrifying me into measures, the contrary of which you have acquiesced with.

He only besought me to suffer his future actions to speak for him; and if I saw him worthy of any favour, that I would not let him be the *only* person within my knowledge, who was not intitled to my consideration.

You refer to a *future time*, Mr. Lovelace; so do I, for the *future proof* of a merit you seem to think for the *past time* wanting: And *justly* you think so. And I was again going from him.

One word more he begged me to hear:—He was determined studiously to avoid all mischief, and every step that might lead to mischief, let my brother's proceedings, short of a violence upon my person, be what they would: But if any attempt, that should extend to that, were to be made, would I have him to be a quiet spectator of my being seized, or carried back or abroad, by this Singleton; or, in case of extremity, was he not permitted to stand up in my defence?

Stand up in my defence, Mr. Lovelace!—I should be very miserable, were there to be a call for that: But do you think I might not be *safe* and *private* in London?—By your friends description of the widow's house, I should think I might be safe there.

The widow's house, he reply'd, as described by his friend, being a back-house, within a front-one, and looking to a garden, rather than a street, had the appearance of privacy: But if, when there, it was not approved, it would be easy to find another more to my liking—Tho', as to his part, the method he would

would advice should be, to write to my uncle Harlowe as one of my trustees, and wait the issue of it here at Mrs. Sorlings's, fearlessly directing it to be answered *hither*. To be afraid of little spirits, was but to encourage insults, he said. The substance of the letter should be, 'To demand as a right what they would refuse if requested as a courtesy: To acknowledge, that I had put myself [too well, he said, did their treatment justify me] into the protection of the *Ladies* of his family (by whose orders, and Lord M's, he himself would appear to act): But that it was upon my own terms; which laid me under no obligation to *them* for the favour, it being no more than they would have granted to any one of my sex, equally distressed:' If I approved not of this method, happy should he think himself, he said, if I would honour him with the opportunity of making such a claim in his *own* name.—But this was a point [with his *but*s again!] that he durst but just touch upon. He hoped, however, that I would think their violence a sufficient inducement for me to take such a wished-for resolution.

Inwardly vexed, I told him, That he himself had proposed to leave me when I was in town: That I expected he would: And that, when I was known to be absolutely independent, I should consider what to write, and what to do: But that, while he was hanging about me, I neither would nor could.

He would be very sincere with me, he said: This project of my brother's had changed the face of things. He must, before he left me, see how I liked the London widow, and her family, if I chose to go thither: They might be people whom my brother might buy. But if he saw they were persons of integrity, he then might go for a day or two, or so. But he must needs say, he could not leave me longer.

Do you propose, Sir, said I, to take up your lodgings in the same house?

He

He did not, he said ; as he knew the use I intended to make of his absence, and my punctilio—And yet the house where he had lodgings was new-fronting: But he could go to his friend Belford's, in Soho; or perhaps to the same Gentleman's house at Edgware, and return on mornings, till he had reason to think this wild project of my brother's laid aside. But no farther till then would he venture.

The result of all was, to set out on Monday next for town. I hope it will be in a happy hour.

I cannot, my dear, say too often how much I am

Your ever-obliged

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R XLIV.

[Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Friday, April 21.

AS it was not probable, that the Lady could give so particular an account of her own confusion, in the affecting scene she mentions on his offering himself to her acceptance; the following extracts are made from his of the above date.

And now, Belford, what wilt thou say, if like the fly buzzing about the bright taper, I had like to have sing'd the silken wings of my liberty?—Never was man in greater danger of being caught in his own snares:—All his views anticipated: All his schemes untry'd; and not having brought the admirable creature to town; nor made an effort to know if she be really angel or woman.

I offer'd myself to her acceptance, with a suddenness, 'tis true, that gave her no time to wrap herself in reserve; and in terms *less tender than fervent*, tending to upbraid her for her past indifference, and reminding her of her injunctions.—For it was her
brother's

brother's plot, not love of me, that had inclined her to dispense with them.

I never beheld so sweet a confusion. What a glory to the pencil, could it do justice to it, and to the mingled impatience which visibly inform'd every feature of the most meaning and most beautiful face in the world. She hemm'd twice or thrice: Her look, now so charmingly silly, then so sweetly significant; till at last, the lovely teaser, teased by my hesitating expectation of her answer, out of all power of articulate speech, burst into tears, and was turning from me, with precipitation, when, taking the liberty of folding her in my happy arms—O think not, best beloved of my heart, think not that this motion, which you may believe to be so contrary to your *former injunctions*, proceeds from a design to avail myself of the cruelty of your relations: If I have *oblig'd* you by it [and you know with what respectful tenderness I have presumed to hint it], it shall be my utmost care for the future—There I stopt—

Then she spoke; but with vexation—I am—I am—*very* unhappy—Tears trickling down her crimson cheeks; and her sweet face, as my arms still incircled the finest waist in the world, sinking upon my shoulder; the dear creature so absent, that she knew not the honour she permitted me.

But why, but why unhappy, my dearest life, said I?—All the gratitude that ever overflow'd the heart of the most oblig'd of men—Justice to myself there stopt my mouth; for what *gratitude* did I owe her for obligations so involuntary?

Then recovering herself, and her usual reserves, and struggling to free herself from my clasping arms, How now, Sir! said she, with a cheek more indignantly glowing, and eyes of a fiercer lustre.

I gave way to her angry struggle;—but, absolutely overcome by so charming a display of innocent confusion,

fusion, I caught hold of her hand, as she was flying from me; and kneeling at her feet, O my angel, said I (quite destitute of reserve, and hardly knowing the tenor of my own speech; and had a parson been there, I had certainly been a gone man), receive the vows of your faithful Lovelace—Make him yours, and only yours, for ever!—This will answer every end!—Who will dare to form plots and stratagems against my wife? That you are not so, is the ground of all their foolish attempts, and of their insolent hopes in Solmes's favour.—O be mine!—I beseech you [thus on my knee I *beseech* you] to be mine.—We shall then have all the world with us: And every-body will applaud an event that every-body expects.

Was the devil in me—I no more intended all this ecstatic nonsense, than I thought the same moment of flying in the air!—All power is with this charming creature!—It is I, not she, at this rate, that must fail in the arduous trial.

Didst thou ever before hear of a man uttering solemn things by an involuntary impulse, in defiance of premeditation, and of all his own proud schemes? But this sweet creature is able to make a man forego every purpose of his heart, that is not favourable to her.—And I verily think, I should be inclined to spare her all further trial [and yet no trial has she had], were it not for the contention that her vigilance has set on foot, *which* shall overcome the *other*. Thou knowest my generosity to my uncontending Rosebud.—And sometimes do I qualify my ardent aspirations after even this very fine creature, by this reflection:—That the charming'st woman on earth, were she an empress, can excel the meanest, in the customary visibles only.—Such is the equality of the dispensation, to the prince and the peasant, in this prime gift, WOMAN.

Well, but what was the result of this involuntary impulse on my part? Wouldst thou not think, I

was

was taken at my offer?—An offer so solemnly made, and on one knee too?

No such thing!—The pretty trifler let me off as easily as I could have wished.

Her brother's project, and to find, that there were no hopes of a reconciliation for her; and the apprehension she had of the mischiefs that might ensue—These, not *my offer*, nor *love of me*, were the causes to which she ascribed all her sweet confusion.—High-treason the *ascription* against my sovereign pride—to make marriage with me, but a second-place refuge!—and as good as to tell me, that her confusion was owing to her concern that there were no hopes, that my enemies would accept of her intended offer to renounce a man, who had ventured his life for her, and was still ready to run the same risk in her behalf!

I re-urged her to make me happy—But I was to be postponed to her cousin Morden's arrival. On him are now placed all her hopes.

I raved, but to no purpose.

Another letter was to be sent, or had been sent, to her aunt Hervey; to which she hoped an answer.

Yet sometimes, I think, that fainter and fainter would have been her procrastinations had I been a man of courage.—But so fearful was I of offending!—

A confounded thing! The man to be so bashful; the lady to want so much courting!—How shall two such come together; no kind mediators in the way?

But I can't help it. I must be contented. 'Tis seldom, however, that a love so ardent meets with a spirit so resigned in the same person. But true love, I am now convinced, only wishes: Nor has it any active will but that of the adorable object.

But, O the charming creature! again to mention London of herself!—Had Singleton's plot been of *my own* contriving, it could not have been a happier expedient to hasten her thither, after she had deserr'd

her journey;—for what reason deferr'd it, I cannot divine.

I inclose the letter from Joseph Leman, which I mentioned to thee in mine of Monday last (*a*), with my answer to it. I cannot resist the vanity that urges me to the communication. Otherwise it were better, perhaps, that I suffer thee to imagine, that this Lady's stars fight against her, and dispense the opportunities* in my favour, which are only the consequences of my own superlative invention.

L E T T E R XLV.

JOSEPH LEMAN, *To* ROBERT LOVELACE, *Esq;*

HE acquaints Mr. Lovelace of the prosecution intended to be set up against him, by his masters, for a Rape upon Miss Betterton, whom, by a stratagem, he had got into his hands; and who afterwards died in child-bed; the child still living, but, as Joseph says, not regarded by his Honour *in the least*. His masters, he says, call it a very vile affair; but God forbid that he should, without his Honour's leave. He hears, he says, that his Honour went abroad to avoid the prosecution which the lady's relations otherwise would have set on foot. And that his masters will not rest till they get the Bettertons to commence it.

Joseph tells him, that this was one of the stories which 'Squire Solmes was to tell his young Lady of, would she have heard him (*b*).

He desires him to let me know, if his Honour's life is in danger from this prosecution; and hopes, if it be, ' that he will not be hanged like as a common man; but only have his head cut off, or so; ' and that he will *natheless* think of his faithful Joseph Leman, before his head shall be condemned, ' because afterwards he understands, that all will be ' the king's, or the *shreeve's*.'

He

(*a*) Letter xxxiii. p. 177. (*b*) See Vol. II. p. 81, 82.

He then acquaints him, that Captain Singleton and his young master and young mistress, are often in close conference together; and that his young master said, before his face, to the captain, *that his blood boiled over for revenge* upon his Honour; and at the same time praised him (Joseph) to the captain, for his fidelity and for his good head, altho' he looked *so seelie*. And then he offers his services, in order to prevent mischief, and to deserve his bounty, and his favour, as to the Blue Boar Inn, which he hears so good an account of——

'And then the *Blue Boar* is not all neither (says Joseph), since, and please your Honour, the pretty Sow [God forgive me for jesting in so serious a matter] runs in my head likewise. I believe I shall love her mayhap more than your Honour would have me; for she begins to be kind and good-humoured, and listens, and please your Honour, like as *if she was among beans*, when I talk about the Blue Boar, and all that.'

'Pray your Honour forgive the jesting of a poor plain man. We common folks have our joys, and please your Honour, like as our betters have; and if we be sometimes snubbed, we can find our underlings to snub again: And if not, we can get a wife mayhap, and snub her: So are masters some how or other ourselves.'

He then tells him how much his conscience smites him for what he has done; since, but for the stories his Honour taught him, it would have been impossible for his old masters, and his lady, to have been so hard-hearted as they were, notwithstanding the malice of his young master and young mistress.

'And here is the sad thing (proceeds he); they cannot come to clear up matters with my dearest young lady, because, as your Honour has ordered it, they have these stories as if bribed out of your Honour's servant; which must not be known, for fear your Honour

‘ Honour should kill him and me too, and blacken
 ‘ the bribers!—Ah, your Honour!—I doubt, your
 ‘ Honour, as that I am a very vile fellow,—Lord
 ‘ bless my soul! and did not intend it.’

‘ But if my dearest young lady should come to
 ‘ harm, and please your Honour, the Horsepond at
 ‘ the Blue Boar—But Lord preserve me from all bad
 ‘ mischiefs, and all bad ends, I pray the Lord!—
 ‘ For tho’ your Honour is kind to me in worldly
 ‘ pelf, yet *what shall a man get to lose his soul*, as ho-
 ‘ ly scripture says, and please your Honour?’

‘ But *natheless* I am in hope of repentance here-
 ‘ after, being but a young man, if I do wrong thro’
 ‘ ignorance; your Honour being a great man, and a
 ‘ great wit; and I a poor creature, not worthy no-
 ‘ tice; and your Honour able to answer for all. But
 ‘ howsoever I am

Your Honour’s faithful servant in all duty,

JOSEPH LEMAN.

April 15 and 16.

LETTER XLVI.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOSEPH LEMAN.

April 17.

HE tells him, That the affair of Miss Betterton
 was a youthful frolick: That there was no Rape
 in the case:—That he went not abroad on her ac-
 count: That she loved him, and he loved her: Yet
 that she was but a tradesman’s daughter; the father
 grown rich, and aiming at a new line of gentry: That
 he never pretended marriage to her: That indeed
 they would have had her join to prosecute him: And
 that she owed her death to her friends barbarity,
 because she would *not*. The boy, he says, is a
 fine boy; no father need to be ashamed of him:
 That he had twice, unknown to the aunt who had
 the care of him, been to see him; and would have
 provided

provided for him had there been occasion. But that the whole family were fond of the child, tho' they were so wicked as to curse the father.

These, he says, were his rules in all his amours: ' To shun common women: To marry off a former mistress, before he took a new one: To set the mother above want, if her friends were cruel: To maintain a lady handsomely in her lying-in: To provide for the little one, according to the mother's degree: And to go in mourning for her, if she dy'd in childbed:—He challenges Joseph to find out a man of more honour than himself in these respects. No wonder, he tells him, that the women love him as they do.

There is no room to fear for either his head or his neck, he tells him, from this affair: ' A lady dying in childbed eighteen months ago; no process begun in her life-time; herself refusing to prosecute: Pretty circumstances, Joseph, to found an indictment for a Rape upon!—Again, I say, I loved her: She was taken from me by her brutal friends while our joys were young.—But enough of dear Miss Betterton. —Dear, I say—For death indears!—Rest to her worthy soul!—There, Joseph, off went a deep sigh to the memory of Miss Betterton!

He encourages him in his jesting—' Jestings, says he, better becomes a poor man than qualms. All we say, all we do, all we wish for, is a jest: He that makes it not so, is a sad fellow, and has the worst of it.—Whoever grudges a poor man joy, ought to have none himself.'

He applauds him for his love to his young Lady: Professes his honourable designs by her: Values himself upon his word; and appeals to him on this head: ' You know, Joseph, says he, that I have gone beyond my promises to you. I do to every-body: And why?—Because it is the best way of shewing, that I have not a grudging or narrow spirit. A just

‘ man will keep his promise: A generous man will
 ‘ go beyond it. That is my rule.’

He lays it wholly at the lady’s door, that they are not marry’d; and laments the distance she keeps him at; which he attributes to Miss Howe, who, he says, is for ever putting her upon contrivances; which is the reason, he tells him, that has obliged him to play off the people at Harlowe-Place upon Mrs. Howe, by his assistance.

He then takes advantage of the hints Joseph gives him of Singleton and James Harlowe’s close conferences:—‘ Since Singleton, says he, who has dependencies upon James Harlowe, is taught to have so good an opinion of you, Joseph, cannot you (still pretending an abhorrence of me, and of my contrivances) propose to Singleton to propose to James Harlowe (who so much thirsts for revenge upon me), to assist him with his whole ship’s crew, upon occasion, to carry off his sister, to Leith, where both have houses, or elsewhere?’

‘ You may tell them, that if this can be affected, it will make me raving mad; and bring your young Lady into all their measures. You can inform them, as from my servant, of the distance she keeps me at, in hopes of procuring her father’s forgiveness, by cruelly giving me up, if insisted upon. That as the only secret my servant has kept from you, is, the place we are in, you make no doubt, that a two guinea bribe will bring that out, and also an information when I shall be at distance from her, that the enterprize may be safely conducted. You may tell them (still as from my servant) that we are about removing from inconvenient lodgings to others more convenient (which is true) and that I must be often absent from her.’

‘ If they listen to your proposal, you will promote your interest with Betty, by telling it to her as a secret. Betty will tell Arabella of it. Arabella will
 ‘ be

' be overjoy'd at any thing that will help forward her
' revenge upon me; and will reveal it (if her brother
' do not) to her uncle Antony. He probably will
' whisper it to Mrs. Howe. She can keep nothing
' from her daughter, tho' they are always jangling.
' Her daughter will acquaint my beloved with it.
' And if it will not, or if it will, come to my ears
' from some of those, you can write it to me, as in
' confidence, by way of preventing mischief, which is
' the study of us both. I can then shew it to my be-
' loved. Then will she be for placing a greater confi-
' dence in me. That will convince me of her love,
' which now I am sometimes ready to doubt. She will
' be for hastening to the safer lodgings. I shall have a
' pretence to stay about her person, as a guard. She
' will be convinced, that there is no expectation of a
' reconciliation. You can give James and Singleton
' continual false scents, as I shall direct you; so that
' no mischief can possibly happen.'

' And what will be the happy, happy, thrice
' happy consequence?—The lady will be mine, in
' an honourable way. We shall all be friends in
' good time. The two guineas will be an agreeable
' addition to the many gratuities I have help'd you to,
' by like contrivances, from this stingy family. Your
' reputation, both for head and heart, will be
' heighten'd. The Blue Boar will also be yours,
' Nor shall you have the least difficulty about raising
' money to buy the stock, if it be worth your while
' to have it.'

' Betty will likewise then be yours. You have both
' saved money, it seems. The whole Harlowe family,
' whom you have so faithfully serv'd ['Tis serving
' them surely, to prevent the mischief which their
' violent son would have brought upon them], will
' throw you in somewhat towards housekeeping. I
' will still add to your store. So nothing but happi-
' ness before you!

' Crow,

‘ Crow, Joseph, crow ! A dunghill of your own
 ‘ in view : Servants to snub at your pleasure : A
 ‘ wife to quarrel with or to love, as your humour
 ‘ leads you : *Landlord* and *Landlady* at every word :
 ‘ to be paid, instead of paying, for your eating and
 ‘ drinking.—But not thus happy only in yourself—
 ‘ happy in promoting peace and reconciliation be-
 ‘ tween two good families, in the long run ; without
 ‘ hurting any christian soul.—O Joseph, honest Jo-
 ‘ seph ! what envy will you raise !—And who would
 ‘ be squeamish with such prospects before him !

‘ This one labour crowns your work. If you can
 ‘ get but such a design entertained by them, whether
 ‘ they prosecute it or not, it will be equally to the
 ‘ purpose of

Your loving friend,

R. LOVELACE.

L E T T E R XLVII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Mrs. HERVEY.
[Inclosed in her last to Miss HOWE.]

Honoured Madam,

Thursday, April 20.

HAVING not had the favour of an answer to a letter I took the liberty to write to you on the 14th, I am in some hopes that it may have miscarried ; for I had much rather it should, than to have the mortification to think, that my aunt Hervey deem'd me unworthy of the honour of her notice.

In this hope, having kept a copy of it, and not being able to express myself in terms better suited to the unhappy circumstances of things, I transcribe and inclose what I then wrote. (a) And I humbly beseech you to favour the contents of it with your interest.

Hitherto it is in my power to perform what I undertake for in this letter : and it would be very grievous
 to

(a) *The contents of this letter are given p. 140, 141.*

to me to be precipitated upon measures, which may render the desirable reconciliation more difficult.

If, Madam, I were permitted to write to you with the hopes of being answer'd, I would clear my intention with regard to the step I have taken, altho' I could not acquit myself, perhaps to some of my severest judges, of an imprudence previous to it.— You, I am sure, would pity me, if you knew all I could say, and how miserable I am in the forfeiture of the good opinion of all my friends.

I flatter myself, that *their* favour is yet retrievable. But whatever be the determination at Harlowe-Place, do not *you*, my dearest aunt, deny me the favour of a few lines, to inform me if there can be any hope of a reconciliation upon terms less shocking than those heretofore endeavoured to be imposed upon me; or if, which God forbid! I am to be for ever reprobated.

At least, my dear aunt, procure for me the justice of my wearing apparel, and the little money, and other things, which I wrote to my sister for, and mention in the inclosed to you; that I may not be destitute of common conveniencies, or be under a necessity to owe an obligation for such, where (at present however) I would least of all owe it.

Allow me to say, that had I *designed* what happened, I might, as to the money and jewels, at least, have saved myself some of the mortifications which I have suffer'd, and which I still farther apprehend, if my request be not comply'd with.

If you are permitted to encourage an eclaircissement of what I hint, I will open my whole heart to you, and inform you of every thing.

If it be any pleasure to have me mortify'd, be pleased to let it be known, that I am extremely mortify'd: And yet it is *entirely* from my own reflections that I am so:—Having nothing to find fault with, in
the

the behaviour of the person from whom every evil was apprehended.

The bearer having business your way, will bring me your answer on Saturday morning, if you favour me according to my hopes. I knew not that I should have this opportunity till I had wrote the above.

I am, my dearest aunt,

Your ever dutiful

CL. HARLOWE.

Be pleased to direct for me, if I am to be favoured with a few lines, to be left at Mr. Osgood's near Soho-square; and nobody shall ever know of your goodness to me, if you desire it to be kept a secret.

LETTER XLVIII.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Sat. April 22.

I Cannot for my life account for your wretch's teasing ways. But he certainly doubts your love of him. In this *he* is a *modest* man, as well as somebody else; and tacitly confesses, that he does not deserve it.

Your Israelitish hankerings after the Egyptian onions [testify'd still more in your letter to your aunt] Your often-repeated regrets for meeting him; for being betray'd away by him: These he cannot bear.

I have been retrospecting the whole of his conduct, and comparing it with his general character; and find, that he is more *consistently*, more *uniformly*, mean, revengeful, and proud, than either of us once imagin'd.

From his cradle, as I may say, as an *only child*, and a *boy*, humourfome, spoiled, mischievous; the governor of his governors.

A liber-

A libertine in his riper years, hardly regardful of appearances; and despising the Sex in general, for the faults of particulars of it, who made themselves too cheap to him.

What has been his behaviour in your family, a CLARISSA in view (from the time your foolish brother was obliged to take a life from him) but defiance for defiances?—Getting you into his power by terror, by artifice. What politeness can be expected from such a man?

Well, but what in such a situation is to be done?—Why, you must despise him—You must hate him—if you can—and run away from him---But whither?—Especially now that your brother is laying foolish plots to put you in a still worse condition, as it may happen?

But if you cannot despise and hate him---If you care not to break with him, you must part with some punctilio's; and if the so doing bring not on the solemnity, you must put yourself into the protection of the ladies of his family.

Their respect for you is of itself a security for his honour, if there could be any room for doubt. And at least, you should remind him of his offer to bring one of the Miss Montague's to attend you at your new lodgings in town, and accompany you, till all is happily over.

This, you'll say, will be as good as *declaring* yourself to be his. And so let it. You ought not now to think of any thing else but to be *his*. Does not your brother's project convince you more and more of this?

Give over then, my dearest friend, any thoughts of this hopeless reconciliation, which has kept you balancing thus long. You own, in the letter before me, that he made very explicit offers, tho' you give me not the very words.---And he gave his reasons, I perceive,

ceive, with his wishes that you should accept them: Which very few of the sorry fellows do; whose plea is generally but a compliment to our self-love---*That we must love them*, however presumptuous and unworthy, *because they love us*.

Were I in *your place*, and had *your* charming delicacies, I should perhaps, do as you do. No doubt but I should expect that the man should urge me with respectful warmth; that he should supplicate with constancy, and that all his words and actions should tend to the one principal point--- Nevertheless, if I suspected art or delay, founded upon his doubts of my love, I would either condescend to clear up his doubts, or renounce him for ever.

And in this last case, I, your Anna Howe, would exert myself, and either find you a private refuge, or resolve to share fortunes with you.

What a wretch, to be so easily answer'd by your reference to the arrival of your cousin Morden? But I am afraid that you was too scrupulous:---For did he not resent that reference?

Could we have *his* account of the matter, I fancy, my dear, I should think you over-nice, over-delicate. Had you laid hold of his *acknowledged* explicitness, he would have been as much in your power, as now you seem to be in *his*?---You wanted not to be told, that the person who had been tricked into such a step as you had taken, must of necessity submit to many mortifications.

But were it to *me*, a girl of spirit, as I am thought to be, I do assure you, I would in a quarter of an hour (all the time I would allow to punctilio in such a case as yours) know what he drives at. Since either he must mean *well* or *ill*. If *ill*, the sooner you know it the better. If *well*, whose modesty is it he distresses, but that of his own wife?

And methinks you should endeavour to avoid all
exaspe-

exasperating recriminations, as to what you have heard of his failure in morals; especially while you are so happy, as not to have occasion to speak of them by experience.

I grant, that it gives a worthy mind some satisfaction, in having borne its testimony against a bad one: But if the testimony be not seasonably borne, and when the faulty person be fitted to receive the correction, it may probably rather harden, or make an hypocrite, than reclaim him.

I am pleased, however, as well as you, with his making light of your brother's wife project.---Poor creature!---And must master Jemmy Harlowe, with his half-wit, pretend to plot, and contrive mischief, yet rail at Lovelace for the same things?---A witty villain deserves hanging at once (and without ceremony, if you please); but a half-witted one deserves broken bones first, and hanging afterwards. I think Lovelace has given his character in few words.

Be angry at me, if you please; but as sure as you are alive, now that this poor creature, whom some call your brother, finds he has succeeded in making you fly your father's house, and that he has nothing to fear but your getting into your *own*, and into an independence of him, but he thinks himself equal to any thing, and so has a mind to fight Lovelace with his own weapons?

Don't you remember his pragmatistical triumph, as told you by your aunt, and prided in by that sawcy Betty Barnes, from his own foolish mouth (*a*)?

I expect nothing from your letter to your aunt. I hope Lovelace will never know the contents of it. In every one of yours, I see that he as warmly resents as he dares, the little confidence you have in him. I should resent it too, were I him; and knew I deserved better.

(a) See Vol. II. p. 300, 301—304, 305.

Don't be scrupulous about cloaths, if you think of putting yourself into the protection of the ladies of his family. They know how matters stand between you and your relations; and love you never the worse for their cruelty.—As to money why will you let me offer in vain?

I know you won't demand possession of your estate. But give him a right to demand it for you; and that will be still better.

Adieu, my dear!—May Heaven guide and direct you in all your steps, is the daily prayer of

Your ever-affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER XLIX.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Friday, April 21.

THOU, Lovelace, hast been long the *entertainer*; I the *entertained*. Nor have I been solicitous to animadvert, as thou wentest along, upon thy inventions, and their tendency. For I believed that with all thy airs, the unequalled perfections and fine qualities of this lady would always be her protection and security. But now, that I find, thou hast so far succeeded, as to induce her to come to town, and to choose her lodgings in a house, the people of which will too probably damp and suppress any honourable motions, which may arise in thy mind in her favour; I cannot help writing: And that professedly in her behalf.

My inducements to this are not owing to virtue:—But if they *were*, what hope could I have of affecting thee, by pleas arising from it?

Nor would such a man as thou art be deterr'd, were I to remind thee of the vengeance which thou mayest one day expect, if thou insultest a woman of her character, family, and fortune.

Neither

Neither are gratitude and honour motives to be mentioned in a woman's favour, to men, such as we are, who consider all those of the sex as fair prize, whom we can obtain a power over. For *our honour*, and *honour* in the *general acceptance* of the word, are two things.

What then is my motive?---Why, the true friendship that I bear thee, Lovelace; which makes me plead *Thy own sake*; and *Thy family sake*, in the justice thou owest to this incomparable creature; who, however, so well deserves to have *her sake* to be mentioned as the principal consideration.

Last time I was at M. Hall, thy noble uncle so earnestly pressed me to use my interest to persuade thee to enter the pale, and gave me so many family-reasons for it, that I could not help engaging myself heartily on his side of the question; and the rather, as I knew, that thy own intentions with regard to this fine woman, were then worthy of *her*. And of this I assured his lordship; who was half-afraid of thee, because of the ill usage thou receivedst from her family. But now, that the case is altered, let me press the matter home to thee from other considerations.

By what I have heard of this lady's perfections from every mouth, as well as from thine, and from every letter thou hast written, where wilt thou find such another woman? And why shouldst thou tempt her virtue?---Why shouldst thou be for trying, where there is no reason to doubt?

Were I in thy case, and designed to marry, and if I preferred a lady, as I know thou dost This, to all the women in the world, I should dread to make further tryal, knowing what *we* know of the sex, for *fear* of succeeding; and especially if I doubted not, that if there were a woman in the world virtuous at heart, it is she.

And let me tell thee, Lovelace, that in this lady's situation, the tryal is not a fair tryal.---Considering

the depth of thy plots and contrivances: Considering the opportunities which I see thou must have with her, in spite of her own heart; all her relations follies acting in concert, tho' unknown to themselves, with thy wicked scheming head: Considering how destitute of protection she is: Considering the house she is to be in, where she will be surrounded with thy implements; *specious, well-bred, and genteel* creatures, not easily to be detected when they are disposed to preserve appearances, especially by a young, inexperienced lady wholly unacquainted with the town: Considering all these things, I say, —what glory, what cause of triumph, wilt thou have, if she should be overcome?—Thou, too, a man born for intrigue, full of invention, intrepid, remorseless, able patiently to watch for thy opportunity; not hurried, as most men, by gusts of violent passion, which often nip a project in the bud, and make the snail that was just putting out its horns to meet the inviter, withdraw into its shell---A man who has no regard to his word or oath to the sex; the lady scrupulously strict to *her* word, incapable of art or design; apt therefore to believe well of others---It would be a miracle if she stood such an attempter, such attempts, and such snares, as I see will be laid for her. And after all, I see not when men are so frail *without* importunity, that so much should be expected from women, daughters of the same fathers and mothers, and made up of the same brittle compounds [education all the difference], nor where the triumph is in subduing them.

May there not be other Lovelaces, thou askest, who, attracted by her beauty, may endeavour to prevail with her?

No; there cannot, I answer, be such another man, person, mind, fortune, and thy character, as above given, taken in.—If thou imaginedst there could, such is thy pride, that thou wouldst think the worse of thyself.

But

But let me touch upon thy predominant passion, *Revenge*; for *Love* [What can be the love of a rake?] is but second to that, as I have often told thee, tho' it has set thee into raving at me—What poor pretences for revenge are the difficulties thou hadst in getting her off; allowing that she had run a risque of being Solmes's wife, had she staid; her injunctions so cruelly turn'd upon her; and her preference of the single life!—If these are other than pretences, why thankest thou not those who threw her into thy power?—Besides, are not the pretences thou makest for further trial, most ingratfully, as well as contradictorily, founded upon the supposition of error in her, occasioned by her *favour* to thee?

And let me, for the utter confusion of thy poor pleas of this nature, ask thee—Would she, in thy opinion, had she willingly gone off with thee, have been intitled to better quarter?—For a *mistress* indeed she might: But wouldst thou for a *wife* have had cause to like her half so well, as now?

That she loves thee, wicked as thou art, and cruel as a panther, there is no reason to doubt. Yet, what a command has she over herself, that such a penetrating self-flatterer as thyself, art sometimes ready to doubt it? Tho' persecuted on the one hand, as she was, by her own family, and attracted on the other, by the splendor of thine; every one of whom wishes for, and courts her to rank herself among them?

Thou wilt perhaps think, that I have departed from my proposition, and pleaded the *lady's sake* more than *thine* in the above—But no such thing. All that I have written, is more in thy behalf than in hers—Since she may make *thee* happy—But it is next to impossible, I should think, if she preserves her delicacy, that thou canst make *her* so. I need not give my reasons. Thou'lt have ingenuity enough, I dare say, were there occasion for it, to subscribe to my opinion.

I plead not for the state from any great liking to it myself. Nor have I, at present, thoughts of entering into it. But as thou art the last of thy name; as thy family is of note and figure in thy country; and as thou thyself thinkest that thou shalt one day marry; is it possible, let me ask thee, that thou canst have such another opportunity as thou now hast, if thou lettest this slip? A lady, in her family and fortune, not unworthy of thine own [tho' thou art so apt, from pride of ancestry, and pride of heart, to speak slightly of the families thou dislikest]; so celebrated for beauty; and so noted at the same time for prudence, for *soul* (I will say, instead of *sense*), and for virtue?

If thou art not so narrow-minded an elf, as to prefer thy own *single* satisfaction to *posterity*, thou, who shouldst wish to beget children for duration, will not postpone till the rake's usual time; that is to say, till diseases or years, or both, lay hold of thee; since in that case thou wouldst intitle thyself to the curses of thy legitimate progeny for giving them a Being altogether miserable: A Being, which they will be obliged to hold upon a worse tenure than that *tenant-courtesy*, which thou callest the *worst* (a); to wit, upon the *doctor's courtesy*; thy descendants also propagating (if they shall live, and be able to propagate) a wretched race, that shall intail the curse, or the *reason* for it, upon remote generations.

Wicked as the sober world accounts us, we have not yet, it is to be hoped, got over all compunction. Altho' we find religion against us, we have not yet presumed to make a religion to suit our practices. We despise those who do. And we know better than to be even *doubters*. In short, we believe a future state of rewards and punishments. But as we have so much youth and health in hand, we hope to have time for repentance. That is to say, in plain English [Nor think

(a) See p. 146.

think thou me too grave, Lovelace: 'Thou art grave sometimes, tho' not often], we hope to live to sense, as long as sense can relish, and purpose to reform when we can sin no longer.

And shall this admirable woman suffer for her generous endeavours to set on foot thy reformation; and for insisting upon proofs of the sincerity of thy professions, before she will be thine?

Upon the whole matter, let me wish thee to consider well what thou art about, before thou goest a step farther in the path which thou hast chalk'd out for thyself to tread, and art just going to enter into. Hitherto all is so far right, that if the lady *mistrusts* thy honour, she has no *proofs*. Be honest to her, then, in *her* sense of the word. None of thy companions, thou knowest, will offer to laugh at what *thou* dost. And if they *should* (on thy entering into a state which hast been so much ridiculed by thee, and by all of us), thou hast one advantage: It is this; that thou canst not be ashamed.

Deferring to the post-day to close my letter, I find one left for my Cousin Osgood, to be forwarded to the lady. It was brought within these two hours by a *particular* hand, and has a Harlowe-seal upon it. As it may therefore be of importance, I dispatch it with my own, by my servant, post haste (*a*).

I suppose you will soon be in town. Without the lady, I hope. Farewel.

Be honest, and be happy.

Sat. Apr. 22.

J. BELFORD.

(*a*) This letter was from her sister Arabella. See Letter liii.

L E T-

L E T T E R L.

Mrs. HERVEY, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[In answer to Letter xlvii.]

Dear Niece,

IT would be hard not to write a few lines, so much pressed to write, to one I ever loved: Your former letter I received, yet was not at liberty to answer it. I break my word to answer you now.

Strange informations are every day received about you. The wretch you are with, we are told, is every hour triumphing and defying—Must not these informations aggravate? You know the uncontrollable-ness of the man. He loves his own humour better than he loves you—tho' so fine a creature as you are; I warn'd you over and over: No young lady was ever more warn'd!—Miss Clarissa Harlowe to do such a thing!

You might have given your friends the meeting. If you had *held* your aversion, it would have been comply'd with. As soon as I was intrusted myself with their *intention* to give up the point, I gave you a hint—a dark one perhaps (*a*)!—But who would have thought—O Miss—Such an *artful* flight!—Such *cunning* preparation!

But you want to clear up things---*What* can you clear up? Are you not gone off?---With a Lovelace too?---*What*, my dear, would you clear up?

You did not *design* to go, you say. Why did you meet him then, chariot-and-six, horsemen, all prepared by him? O, my dear, how Art produces Art! ---Will it be believed?---If it *would*, what power will he be thought to have had over you!---He!---Who?---*Lovelace*!---The vilest of libertines!---Over whom?---A *Clarissa Harlowe*!---Was your
love

(a) See Vol. II. p. 302.

love for such a man above your reason?—Above your resolution?—What credit would a belief of this, *if* believed, bring you?—How mend the matter;—Oh! that you had stood the next meeting!—

I'll tell you all that was intended, if you had.

It was indeed imagined, that you would not have been able to resist your father's intreaties and commands. He was resolved to be all condescension, if anew you had not provoked him. *I love my Clary Harlowe*, said he, but an hour before the killing tidings were brought him; *I love her as my life; I will kneel to her, if nothing else will do, to prevail upon her to oblige me!*

Your father and mother (reverse to what should have been!) would have humbled themselves to you: And if you *could* have denied them, and refused to sign the settlements previous to the meeting, they would have yielded, altho' with regret.

But it was presumed, so naturally sweet your temper, so self-denying, as they thought you, that you could *not* have withstood them, notwithstanding all your dislike of the *one* man, without a greater degree of headstrong passion for the *other*, than you had given any of us reason to expect from you.

If you *had*, the meeting on Wednesday, would have been a lighter trial to you. You would have been presented to all your assembled friends, with a short speech only, 'That this was the young creature, 'till very lately faultless, condescending, and obliging, now having cause to glory in a triumph over the wills of father, mother, uncles, the most indulgent; over family interests, family views, and preferring her own will to every-body's; and this for a transitory preference to *person* only; the morals of the men not to be compared with each other's.'

Thus

Thus complied with, and perhaps blessed, by your father and mother, and the consequences of your disobedience deprecated in the solemnest manner by your inimitable mother, your *generosity* would have been appealed to, since your duty would have been found too weak an inducement, and you would have been bid to withdraw for one half-hour's consideration: Then would the settlements have been again tendered for your signing, by the person least disobliging to you; by your good Norton perhaps; she perhaps seconded by your father again: And if again refused, you would again have been led in, to declare such your refusal. Some restrictions, which you yourself had proposed, would have been insisted upon. You would have been permitted to go home with me, or with your uncle Antony [*which*, not agreed upon, because they hoped you might be prevailed with], there to tarry till the arrival of your cousin Morden; or till your father could have borne to see you; or till assured, that the views of Lovelace were at an end.

This the intention, your father so set upon your compliance, so much in hopes that you would have yielded, that you would have been prevailed upon by methods so condescending and so gentle; no wonder that *he*, in particular, was like a distracted man, when he heard of your flight—of your flight, so *premeditated*;—with your ivy summer-house dinings, your arts to blind me, and all of us!—naughty, naughty young creature!

I, for my part, would not believe it, when told of it. Your uncle Hervey would not believe it. We rather expected, we rather feared, a still more desperate adventure. There could be but one more desperate; and I was readier to have the cascade first resorted to, than the garden back-door.—Your mamma fainted away, while her heart was torn between the two apprehensions—Your father, poor man! your father, was beside himself for near an hour. To this day he
can

can hardly bear your name: Yet can think of nobody else. Your merits my dear, but aggravate your fault.—Something of fresh aggravation almost every hour.—How can any favour be expected?

I am sorry for it; but am afraid, nothing you ask will be complied with.

Why mention you, my dear, the saving you from mortifications; who have gone off with a man? What a poor pride is it to stand upon any thing else?

I dare not open my lips in your favour. No-body dare. Your letter must stand by itself. This has caused me to send it to Harlowe-place. Expect therefore great severity. May you be enabled to support the lot you have chosen! O my dear! how unhappy have you made every-body! Can you expect to be happy? Your father wishes you had never been born. Your poor mother—But why should I afflict you? There is now no help!—You must be changed indeed, if you are not very unhappy yourself in the reflections your thoughtful mind must suggest to you.

You must now make the best of your lot. Yet not married, it seems!

It is in your power, you say, to perform whatever you shall undertake to do: You may deceive yourself: You hope that your reputation, and your friends favour, may be retrieved. Never, never, both, I doubt; if either. Every offended person (and that is all who loved you, and are related to you) must join to restore you: When can these be of one mind, in a case so notoriously wrong?

It would be very grievous, you say, to be precipitated upon measures, that may make the desirable reconciliation more difficult. Is it now, my dear, a time for you to be afraid of being precipitated? At present, if ever, there can be no thought of reconciliation. The upshot of your precipitation must first be seen. There may be murder yet, as far as we know.

Will

Will the man you are with, part willingly with you? If *not*, what may be the consequence? If he *will*, Lord blefs me! what fhall we think of his reasons for it?—I will fly this thought.—I know your purity—But, my dear, are you not out of all protection?—Are you not unmarried?—Have you not (making your daily prayers ufelefs) thrown yourfelf into temptation? And is not the man the moft wicked of plotters?

You have hitherto, you fay (and I think, my dear, with an air unbecoming your declared penitence), no fault to find with the behaviour of a man from whom every evil was apprehended: Like Cæfar to the Roman augur, which I heard you tell of, who had bid him *Beware of the ides of March: The ides of March*, faid Cæfar, feeing the augur among the croud, as he marched in ftate to the fenate-house, which he never was to return from alive, *The ides of March are come. But they are not paff*, the augur reply'd. Make the application, my dear: May you be able to make this reflection upon his good behaviour to the laft of your knowledge of him! May he behave himfelf better to you, than he ever did to any-body elfe whom he had power over! Amen!

No answer, I befeech you. I hope your meffenger will not tell any-body that I have written to you. And I dare fay you will not fhew what I have written to Mr. Lovelace—For I have written with the lefs referve, depending upon your prudence.

You have my prayers.

My Dolly knows not that I write. Nobody does: Not even Mr. Hervey.

Dolly would have feveral times written: But having defended your fault with heat, and with a partiality, that alarmed us [Such a fall as yours, my dear, muft be alarming to all parents], ſhe has been forbidden, on pain of lofing our favour for ever: And this at your family's request, as well as by her father's commands.

You

Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

353

You have the poor girl's hourly prayers, however, I will tell you, tho' she knows not what I do, as well as those of

Your truly afflicted aunt,

Friday, April 21.

D. HERVEY.

L E T T E R L I.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

[With the preceding.]

Sat. Morn. April 22.

I Have just now received the inclosed from my aunt Hervey. Be pleased, my dear, to keep her secret of having written to the unhappy wretch, her niece.

I may go to London, I see, or where I will. No matter what becomes of me.

I was the willinger to suspend my journey thither, till I heard from Harlowe-Place. I thought, if I could be encouraged to hope for a reconciliation, I would let this man see, that he should not have me in his power, but upon my own terms, if at all.

But I find I must be *his*, whether I will or not; and perhaps thro' still greater mortifications than those great ones which I have already met with.--- And must I be so absolutely thrown upon a man, with whom I am not at all satisfied!

My letter is sent, you see, to Harlowe-Place. My heart akes for the reception it may meet with there. One comfort only arises to me from its being sent; That my aunt will clear herself, by the communication, from the supposition of having corresponded with the poor creature whom they have all determined to reprobate. It is no small part of my misfortune, that I have weakened the confidence one dear friend has in another, and made one look cool upon another. My poor cousin Dolly, you see, has reason to regret this, as well as my aunt. Miss Howe, my dear Miss

VOL. III.

Z

Howe,

Howe, is but too sensible of the effects of my fault, having had more words with her mother on my account, than ever she had on any other. Yet the man who has drawn me into all this evil, I must be thrown upon!--Much did I consider, much did I apprehend, *before* my fault, supposing I *were* to be guilty of it: But I saw it not in all its shocking lights.

And now, to know that my father, an hour before he received the tidings of my supposed flight, owned that he loved me as his life: That he would have been all condescension: That he would——Oh! my dear, how tender, how mortifyingly tender, now in him! My aunt need not have been afraid, that it should be known, that she has sent me such a letter as this!--A father to KNEEL to a daughter!--There would not indeed have been any bearing of that!--What I should have done in such a case, I know not. Death would have been much more welcome to me, than such a sight, on such an occasion, in behalf of a man so very, very disgusting to me! But I had deserved annihilation, had I suffered my father to kneel in vain.

Yet, had but the sacrifice of *inclination* and *personal preference* been *all*, less than KNEELING should have done. My *duty* should have been the conqueror of my *inclination*. But an aversion---an aversion so *very* sincere!--The triumph of a cruel and ambitious brother, ever so uncontrollable, joined with the insults of an envious sister, bringing wills to *theirs*, which otherwise would have been favourable to *me*: The marriage-duties so very strong, so solemnly to be engaged for: The marriage-intimacies (permit me to say to you, my friend, what the purest, altho' with apprehension, must think of) so *very* intimate: Myself one, who never looked upon any duty, much less a voluntarily-vow'd one, with indifference; could it have been honest in me to have given my hand to an
odious

odious-hand, and to have consented to such a more than reluctant, such an *immiscible* union, if I may so call it?—For life too!—Did I not *think* more and deeper than most young creatures think; did I not *weigh*, did I not *reflect*; I might perhaps have been less obstinate.—*Delicacy* (may I presume to call it?) *thinking, weighing, reflection*, are not blessings (I have not found them such) in the degree I have them. I wish I had been able, in some very nice cases, to have known what *indifference* was; yet not to have my *ignorance* imputable to me as a fault. Oh! my dear! the finer sensibilities, if I may suppose mine to be such, make not happy!

What a method had my friends intended to take with me!—This, I dare say, was a method chalked out by my brother. *He*, I suppose, was to have presented me to all my assembled friends, as the daughter capable of preferring her own will to the wills of them all. It would have been a sore trial, no doubt. Would to heaven, however, I had stood it—Let the issue have been what it would, would to heaven I had stood it!

There may be murder, my aunt says. This looks as if she knew of Singleton's rash plot. Such an *upshot*, as she calls it, of this unhappy affair, Heaven avert!

She flies a thought that I can *less* dwell upon—A *cruel* thought!—But she has a poor opinion of the purity she compliments me with, if she thinks, that I am not, by God's grace, above temptation from this sex. Altho' I never saw a man, whose *person* I could like, before this man; yet his faulty character allowed me but little merit from the indifference I pretended to on his account. But, now I see him in nearer lights, I like him less than ever.—Indeed, I never liked him so little as now. Upon my word, I think I could hate him (if I do not already hate him) sooner than any man I ever thought tolerably of.—A

good reason why: Because I have been more disappointed in my expectations of him; altho' they never were so high, as to have made him my choice in preference to the single life, had that been permitted me. Still, if the giving him up for ever will make my path to reconciliation easy, and if they will signify as much to me, they will see that I never will be *bis*: For I have the vanity to think my soul his soul's superior.

You will say I rave: Forbid to write to my aunt, and taught to despair of reconciliation, you, my dear, must be troubled with my passionate resentments. What a wretch was I to meet him, and thereby to leave it not in my power to stand the general meeting with my friends!—All would now have been over!—And who can tell, when my present distresses will?—Rid of both men, I had been now perhaps at my aunt Hervey's, or at my uncle Antony's; wishing for my cousin Morden's arrival; who might have accommodated all.

I *intended*, indeed, to have stood it—And, if I had, how know I by whose name I might now have been called? For how should I have resisted a condescending, a *kneeling* father, had he been able to have kept his temper with me!

Yet my aunt says, *he* would have relented if I had not. Perhaps he would have been moved by my humility, before he could have shewn such *undue* condescension. Such temper as he would have received me with, might have been improved upon in my favour. And that he had design'd *ultimately* to relent, how it clears my friends, at least to themselves, and condemns me! O why were my aunt's hints [I remember them now] so *very* dark?—Yet I intended to have returned after the interview; and then perhaps she would have explain'd herself.—O this artful, this designing Lovelace!—Yet I must repeat, that most ought I to blame myself for meeting him.

But

But far, far, be banish'd from me, fruitless récrimination! Far banished, *because* fruitless! Let me wrap myself about in the the mantle of my integrity, and take comfort in my unfaulty intention! Since it is now too late to look back, let me collect all my fortitude, and endeavour to stand those shafts of angry providence, which it will not permit me to shun! That, whatever the trials may be, which I am destined to undergo, I may not behave unworthily in them; but come out amended by them.

Join with me in this prayer, my beloved friend; for your own honour's sake, as well as for love's sake, join with me in it: Lest a deviation on my side should, with the censorious, cast a shade upon a friendship, which has no *body*, no levity, in it, and whose basis is improvement, as well in the greater as lesser duties.

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R LII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Saturday, P. M. April 23.

O My best, my only friend! Now indeed is my heart broken!—It has received a blow it never will recover! Think not of corresponding with a wretch who now seems absolutely devoted! How can it be otherwise, if a parent's curses have the weight I always attributed to them, and have heard so many instances of their being follow'd by!—Yes, my dear Miss Howe, superadded to all my afflictions, I have the consequences of a father's curse to struggle with! How shall I support this reflection!—My past and my present situation so much authorizing my apprehensions!

I have, at last, a letter from my unrelenting sister. Would to heaven I had not provoked it, by my se-

cond letter to my aunt Hervey. It lay ready for me, it seems. The thunder slept, till I awaken'd it. I inclose the letter itself. Transcribe it I cannot. There is no bearing the thoughts of it: For (shocking reflection!) the curse extends to the life beyond this.

I am in the depth of vapourish despondency. I can only repeat, shun, fly, correspond not with a wretch so devoted, as

Your CLARISSA HARLOWE.

L E T T E R I.III.

To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

To be left at Mr. Osgood's, near Soho-Square.

Friday, April 21.

IT was expected you would send again to me, or to my aunt Hervey. The inclosed has lain ready for you therefore by direction. You will have no answer from any-body, write to *whom* you will, and as *often* as you will, and *what* you will.

It was designed to bring you back by proper authority, or to send you whither the disgraces you have brought upon us all, should be in the likeliest way, after a while to be forgotten. But I believe that design is over: So you may *range* securely: Nobody will think it worth while to give themselves any trouble about you. Yet my mamma has obtained leave to send you your cloaths, of all sorts: But your cloaths only. This is a favour you'll see by the within letter not *design'd* you: And *now* not granted for *your* sake, but because my poor mother cannot bear in her sight any thing you used to wear. Read the inclosed, and tremble.

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

To

To the most ungrateful and undutiful of daughters.

Harlowe-Place, Sat. April 15.

Sister that was,

FOR I know not what name you are *permitted*, or *choose* to go by.

You have filled us all with distraction. My father, in the first agitations of his mind, on discovering your wicked, your shameful elopement, imprecated on his knees, a fearful curse upon you. Tremble at the recital of it!—No less, than ‘that you may meet your punishment, both *here* and *hereafter*, by means of the very wretch, in whom you have chosen to place your wicked confidence.’

Your cloaths will not be sent you. You seem, by leaving them behind you, to have been secure of them, whenever you demanded them. But perhaps you could think of nothing but meeting your fellow:—Nothing but how to get off your forward self!—For every thing seems to have been forgot, but what was to contribute to your wicked flight.—Yet, you judged right, perhaps, that you would have been detected, had you endeavour’d to get off your cloaths!—Cunning creature! not to make *one* step that we could guess at you by!—Cunning to effect your own ruin, and the disgrace of all the family!

But does the wretch put you upon writing for your things, for fear you should be too expensive to him?—That’s it, I suppose.

Was there ever a giddier creature?—Yet this is the celebrated, the blazing Clarissa---Clarissa, *what?* ---Harlowe, no doubt!---And Harlowe it will be, to the disgrace of us all!--

Your drawings and your pieces are all taken down; as is also your own-whole length picture, in the Vandike taste, from your late parlour: They are taken down, and thrown into your closet, which will be
nailed

nailed up, as if it were not a part of the house; there to perish together: For who can bear to see them? Yet, how did they use to be shewn to every-body; the former, for the magnifying of your dainty finger-works; the latter for the imputed dignity [dignity now in the dust!] of your boasted figure (a); and this by those fond parents whom you have run away from with so *much*, yet with so *little* contrivance!

My brother vows revenge upon your libertine—For the *family's* sake he vows it—Not for *yours*!—For he will treat you, he declares, like a common creature, if ever he sees you: And doubts not, that this will be your fate.

My uncle Harlowe renounces you for ever.

So does my uncle Antony.

So does my aunt Hervey.

So do *I*, base unworthy creature!—The disgrace of a good family, and the property of an infamous rake, as questionless you will soon find yourself, if you are not already!

Your books, since they have not taught you what belongs to your family, to your sex, and to your education, will not be sent you. Your money neither. Nor yet the jewels so undeservedly made yours! For it is wished you may be seen a beggar along London streets!

If all this is heavy, lay your hand to your heart, and ask yourself, why you have deserved it?

Every gentleman, whom your pride taught you to reject with scorn (Mr. Solmes excepted, who, however, has reason to rejoice that he missed you), triumphs in your shameful elopement; and now knows how to account for his being refused.

Your worthy Norton is ashamed of you, and mingles her tears with your mamma's; both reproach-
ing

(a) *This picture is drawn as big as the life by Mr. Highbmore, and is in his possession.*

ing themselves for their shares in you, and in so fruitless an education.

Every-body, in short, is ashamed of you: But none more than

ARABELLA HARLOWE.

L E T T E R L I V .

Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Tuesday, April 25.

BE comforted; be not dejected; do not despond, my dearest and best-beloved friend. God Almighty is just and gracious, and gives not his assent to rash and inhuman curses. If he did, malice, envy, and the blackest passions, in the blackest hearts would triumph, and the best (blasted by the malignity of the worst) would be miserable in both worlds.

This malediction shews only, what manner of spirit they are of, and how much their sordid views exceed their parental love. 'Tis all rage and disappointment, my dear; disappointment in designs proper to be frustrated; and all you have to grieve for is, that their own rashness will turn upon their own hearts. God Almighty cannot succeed a curse so presumptuous, as to be carried into *his* futurity!

Fie upon them!—Fie upon them, will all the world say, who shall come to the knowledge of such overflowing venom!—And the more, when all shall know, that what they resent so outrageously, is owing to themselves!

My mother blames them for this wicked letter; and she pities you; and, of her own accord, wish'd me to write to comfort you, for this once: For she says, It is pity your heart, which was so noble (and when the sense of your fault, and the weight of a parent's curse, are so strong upon you), should be quite broken.

Lord

Lord bless me, how your aunt writes!—Can there be two rights and two wrongs in palpable cases!—But, my dear, she *must* be wrong: So they all have been, justify themselves now as they will. They can only justify themselves *to* themselves from selfish principles, resolving to *acquit* not fairly to *try* themselves. Did your unkind aunt, in all the tedious progress of your contentions with them, give you the least hope of their relenting?—Her dark hints I now recollect, as well as you. But why was any thing good or hopeful to you, to be *darkly* hinted?—How easy was it for *her*, who pretended always to love you so well; for *her*, who can give such flowing licence to her pen for your hurt; to have given you one word, one line (in confidence) of their pretended change of measures!

But don't mind their after pretences, my dear—All of them serve but for tacit confessions of their vile usage of you. I will keep your aunt's secret, never fear. I would not, on any consideration, that my mother should see it.

You will now see, that you have nothing left, but to overcome all scrupulousness, and marry as soon you have opportunity. Determine upon this, my dear.

I will give you a motive for it regarding myself. For this I have resolved, and this I have vowed [O friend, the best beloved of my heart, be not angry with me for it!] 'That so long as your happiness is 'in suspense, I will never think of marrying.' In justice to the man I shall have, I have vowed this: For my dear must I not be miserable, if you are so? And what an unworthy wife must I be to any man, who cannot have interest enough in my heart, to make his obligingness a balance for an affliction he has not caused?

I would shew Lovelace your sister's abominable letter, were it to me. I inclose it. It shall not have a place in this house. This will enter him of course into
the

the subject, which now you ought to have most in view. Let him see what you suffer for him. He cannot prove base to such an excellence. I should never enjoy my head or my senses, should this man prove a villain to you! With a merit so exalted, you may have punishment more than enough for your involuntary fault, in that husband.

I would not have you be too sure, that their project to seize you is over. The words intimating, that it is over, in the letter of that abominable Arabella, seem calculated to give you security.---She only says, she believes that design is over.---And I do not yet find from Miss Lloyd, that it is disavow'd. So it will be best, when you are at London, to be private, and to let every direction be to a third place; for fear of the worst; for I would not, for the world, have you fall into the hands of such flaming and malevolent spirits, by surprize.

I will myself be content to direct to you at some *third* place; and that I may have it to aver to my mother, or to any other, if occasion be, that I know not where you are.

Besides, this measure will make you less apprehensive of the consequences of their violence, should they resolve to attempt to carry you off in spite of Lovelace.

I would have you direct to Mr. Hickman, even your answer to this. I have reason for it. Besides, my mamma, notwithstanding this particular indulgence, is very positive.

I would not have you dwell on the shocking occasion. I know how it must affect you. But don't let it. Try to make light of it [Forget it you can't]: And pursue other subjects---The subjects before you. And let me know your progress, and what he says [So far may you enter into this hateful subject] to this abominable letter and diabolical curse. I expect that this will aptly introduce the grand topic between you, without needing a mediator.

Come,

Come, my dear, when things are at worst, they must mend. Good often comes, when evil is expected. Happily improv'd upon, this very curse may turn to a blessing.—But if you despond, there can be no hopes of cure.—Don't let them break your heart; for that, it is plain to me, is now what some people have in view to do.

How poor, to with-hold from you your books, your jewels, and your money!—The latter is all you can at present want, since they will vouchsafe to send your cloaths.—I sent fifty guineas by the bearer, inclosed in single papers in my *Norris's Miscellanies*. I charge you, as you love me, return them not.

I have more at your service. So if you like not your lodgings, or his behaviour, when you get to town, leave both out of hand.

I would advise you to write to Mr. Morden without delay. If he intends for England, it may hasten him. And you'll do very well till he can come. But surely Lovelace is bewitched, if he takes not his happiness from *your consent*, before that of Mr. Morden's is made needful by his arrival.

Come, my dear, be comforted. All is hastening to be well. This very violence shews that it is. Suppose yourself to be *me*, and me to be *you* [You *may*—for your distress is mine;] and then give to yourself those consolations which, in that case, you would give me. Nothing but words has passed, vehement and horrid as those are. The divine goodness will not let them be more. Can you think that heaven will seal to the black passions of its depraved creatures? Manage with your usual prudence the stake before you, and all will be still happy.

I have as great apprehensions as you of the weight of a parent's curse: But not of the curse of those parents, who have more to answer for, than the child, in the very errors they so much resent. To intitle those horrid words to efficacy, the parents views
should

should be pure, should be altogether justifiable ; and the child's ingratitude and undutifulness, without excuse ; and her *choice* too, as totally inexcusable.

This is the true light, as I humbly conceive, that this matter should appear to you in, and to everybody. If you let not despondency seize you, you will strengthen, you will add more day to this but glimmering light, from

Your ever-affectionate and faithful

ANNA HOWE.

I hurry This away by Robert. I will inquire into the truth of your aunt's pretences, about their change of measures, had you not gone away.

L E T T E R LV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Wednesday Morning, April 26.

YOUR letter, my beloved Miss Howe, gives me great comfort. How sweetly do I experience the truth of the wise man's observation, *That a faithful friend is the medicine of life!*

Your messenger finds me just setting out for London : The chaise at the door. Already I have taken leave of the good widow, who has oblig'd me with the company of her eldest daughter, at Mr. Lovelace's request, while he rides by us. The young gentlewoman is to return in two or three days with the chaise, in its way to my Lord M.'s Hertfordshire seat.

I received this dreadful letter on Sunday, when Mr. Lovelace was out. He saw, on his return, my extreme anguish and dejection ; and he was told how much worse I had been : For I had fainted away twice.

I think it has touch'd my head as well as my heart. He would fain have seen it. But I would not permit that, because of the threatnings he would have found in it, against himself. As it *was*, the effect it had upon me, made him break out into execrations and menaces. I was so ill, that he himself advised me to delay going to town on Monday, as I propos'd to do.

He is extremely regardful and tender of me. All that you suppos'd *would* follow this violent letter, from him, *has* followed it. He has offer'd himself to my acceptance, in so unreserved a manner, that I am concern'd I have written so freely and so diffidently of him. Pray, my dearest friend, keep to yourself every thing that may appear disreputable of him from me.

I must own to you, that his kind behaviour, and my low-spiritedness, co-operating with your former advice, and my unhappy situation, made me that very Sunday evening receive unreservedly his declarations: And now, indeed, I am more in his power than ever.

He presses me every hour for fresh tokens of my esteem *for* him, and confidence *in* him. He owns, that he doubted the one, and was ready to despair of the other. And, as I have been brought to some verbal concessions, if he should prove unworthy, I am sure, I shall have great reason to blame this violent letter: For I have no resolution at all. Abandon'd thus of all my natural friends, and only you to pity me; and *you* restrained as I may say; I have been forced to turn my desolate heart to such protection as I could find.

All my comfort is, that your advice repeatedly given to the same purpose, in your kind letter before me, warrants me. Upon the strength of that, I now set out the more chearfully to London: For, before, a heavy weight hung upon my heart, and, altho' I thought it best and safest to go, yet my spirit sunk, I know not why, at every motion I made towards a preparation for it.

I hope

I hope no mischief will happen on the road.—I hope these violent spirits will not meet.

Every one is waiting for me.—Pardon me, my best, my kindest friend, that I return your Norris. In these more promising prospects, I cannot have occasion for your favour. Besides, I have some hope, that with my cloaths they will send me what I wrote for, altho' it is deny'd me in the letter. If they do not, and if I should have occasion, I can but signify my wants to so ready a friend. But I had rather methinks you should have it still to say, if challenged, that nothing of this nature has been either requested or done. I say This, with a view intirely to my future hopes of recovering your mamma's favour, which, next to that of my own father and mother, I am most solicitous to recover.

I must add one thing more, notwithstanding my hurry; and that is: Mr. Lovelace offered to attend me to Lord M.'s, or to send for his chaplain, yesterday: He pressed me to consent to this proposal, most earnestly; and even seem'd more desirous to have the ceremony pass here, than at London: For when there I had told him, it was time enough to consider of so weighty and important a matter. Now, upon the receipt of your kind, your consolatory letter, methinks I could almost wish it *had been* in my power to comply with his earnest solicitations. But this dreadful letter has unhinged my whole frame. Then some little punctilio surely is necessary. No preparation made. No Articles drawn. No licence ready. Grief so extreme: No pleasure in prospect, nor so much as in wish—O my dear, who could think of entering into so solemn an engagement! Who, *so* unprepared, could seem to be *so* ready!

If I could flatter myself, that my indifference to all the joys of this life proceeded from *proper* motives, and not rather from the disappointments and mortifications my pride has met with, how much rather,

I think, should I choose to be wedded to my shroud, than to any man on earth !

Indeed, I have at present no pleasure, but in *your* friendship. Continue That to me, I beseech you. If my heart rises hereafter to more, it must be built on that foundation.

My spirits sink again, on setting out. Excuse this depth of vapourish dejection, which forbids me even *hope*, the cordial that keeps life from stagnating, and which never was deny'd me, till within these eight-and-forty hours.

But 'tis time to relieve you.

Adieu, my best beloved and kindest friend ! Pray for your

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R LVI.

Miss HOWE, *To Miss* CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Thursday, April 27.

I Am sorry you return'd my Norris. But you must be allow'd to do as you please. So must I, in return. We must neither of us, perhaps, expect absolutely of the other what is the rightest to be done: And yet few folks, so young, better know, *what that rightest is*. I cannot separate myself from you, my dear; altho' I give a double instance of my vanity in this particular compliment to myself.

I am most heartily rejoiced, that your prospects are so much mended; and that, as I hoped, good has been produced out of evil. What must the man have been, what must have been his views, had he not taken such a turn, upon a letter so vile, and treatment so unnatural, himself principally the occasion of it ?

You *know best* your motives for suspending: But I wish you had taken him at offers so earnest. Why should

should you not have permitted him to send for Lord M.'s chaplain? If punctilio only was in the way, and want of a licence, and of proper preparations, and such-like, my service to you, my dear: And there is ceremony tantamount to your ceremony.

Don't, don't, my dear friend, *again* be so very melancholy a decliner, as to prefer a shroud, when the matter you wish for is in your power; and when, as you have said justly heretofore, persons cannot die when they will.

But it is a strange perverseness in human nature, that we covet at a distance, what when near, we slight.

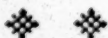
You have now but one point to pursue: That is marriage. Let that be compassed. Leave the rest to Providence; and follow as that leads. You'll have a handsome man, a genteel man; he would be a *wise* man, if he were not vain of his endowments, and wild and intriguing: But while the eyes of many of our sex, taken by so specious a form, and so brilliant a spirit, encourage that vanity, you must be contented to stay till grey hairs and prudence enter upon the stage together. You would not have every thing in the same man.

I believe Mr. Hickman treads no crooked paths; but he hobbles most ungracefully in a strait one. Yet Hickman, tho' he *pleases* not my eye, nor *diverts* my ear, will not, as I believe, *disgust* the one, nor *shock* the other. Your man, as I have lately said, will always keep up attention; you will always be alive with him, tho' perhaps more from fears than hopes: While Hickman will neither say any thing to keep one awake, nor yet, by shocking adventures, make one's slumbers uneasy.

I believe I now know which of the two men so prudent a person as *you* would, at first, have chosen; nor doubt I, that you can guess which *I* would have made choice of, if I might. But proud as we are

the proudest of us all can *only* refuse, and many of us accept the but half-worthy, for fear a still worse should offer.

If the men had chosen for spirits like their own, altho' Mr. Lovelace, at the long run, might have been too many for me, I don't doubt but I should have given heart-ake for heart-ake, for one half-year at least; while you, with my dull-swift, would have glided on *as serenely, as calmly, as accountably*, as the succeeding seasons; and varying no otherwise than as they, to bring on new beauties and conveniencies to all about you.



I WAS going on in this style—But my mamma broke in upon me, with a prohibitory aspect. “She gave me leave but for one letter only.”—She has seen your odious uncle; and they have been in close conference again.

She has vexed me; I must lay this by till I hear from you again; not knowing where to send it.

Direct me to a *Third place*, as I desired in my former.

I told my mother (on her challenging me), that I was writing indeed, and to you: But it was only to amuse myself; for I protested, that I knew not where to send to you.

I hope that your next may inform me of your nuptials, altho' the next to that were to acquaint me, that he was the ungratefulest monster on earth; as he must be, if not the kindest husband in it.

My mamma has vexed me. But so, on revising, I wrote before.—But she has *unbing'd* me, as you call it—Pretended to catechise Hickman, I assure you, for contributing to our supposed correspondence. Catechise him *severely* too, upon my word!—I believe I have a sneaking kindness for the sneaking fellow; for I can't endure that any-body should treat him like a fool but myself.

I believe,

I believe, between you and me, the good Lady forgot herself. I heard her loud.—She possibly imagin'd, that my papa was come to life again!—Yet the man's meekness might have sooner convinced her, I should have thought; for my papa, it seems, would talk as loud as she:—I suppose, tho' within a few yards of each other, as if both were out of their way, and were hollowing at half a mile's distance, to get in again.

I know you'll blame me for this sauciness.—But I told you I was vexed: And if I had not a spirit, my parentage on both sides might be doubted.

You must not chide me too severely, however, because I have learn'd of you not to defend myself in an error:—And I own I am wrong:—And that's enough. You won't be so generous in this case, as you are in every other, if you don't think it is.

Adieu, my dear! I must, I will love you; and love you for ever! So subscribes your

ANNA HOWE.

LETTER LVII.

From the same. Inclosed in the above.

Thursday, April 27.

I HAVE been making inquiry, as I told you I would, whether your relations had really (before you left them) resolved upon that change of measures which your aunt mentions in her letter:—And by laying together several pieces of intelligence, some drawn from my mamma, by your uncle Antony's communications; some from Miss Lloyd, by your sister's; and some by a third way, that I shall not tell you of; I have reason to think the following a true state of the case,

That there was no intention of a change of measures, till within two or three days of your going away.

away. On the contrary, your brother and sister, though they had no hope of prevailing with you in Solmes's favour, were resolved never to give over their persecutions, till they had pushed you upon taking some step, which, by help of their good offices, should be deemed inexcusable by the half-witted souls they had to play upon.

But that at last your mamma (tired with and perhaps ashamed of the passive part she had acted) thought fit to declare to Miss Bell, that she was determined to try to put an end to the family-feuds; and to get your uncle Harlowe to second her endeavours.

This alarmed your brother and sister; and then a change of measures was resolved upon. Solmes's offers were however too advantageous to be given up; and your father's condescension was now to be their sole dependence, and (as they give out) your last trial.

And, indeed, my dear, this must have succeeded, I verily think, with such a daughter as they had to deal with, could that father, who never, I dare say, kneeled in his life, but to God, have so far condescended, as your aunt writes he would.

But then, my dear, what could this have done?—Perhaps you would have given Lovelace the meeting, in hopes to pacify him, and prevent mischief; supposing that they had given you time, and not hurried you directly into the state. But if you had not met him, you see, that he was resolved to visit them, and well attended too: And what must have been the consequence?

So that, upon the whole, we know not but matters may be best as they *are*, however undesirable that *best* is.

I hope your considerate and thoughtful mind will make a good use of this hint. Who would not with patience sustain even a great evil, if she could persuade

suade herself, that it was kindly dispensed, in order to prevent a *still* greater?—Especially, if she could sit down, as you can, and acquit her own heart?

Permit me one further observation—Do we not see, from the above state of the matter, what might have been done before, by *the worthy person* of your family, had she exerted the *mother*, in behalf of a child so meritorious, yet so much oppressed?

Adieu, my dear. I will be ever yours.

ANNA HOWE.

Miss Harlowe, in her answer to the first of the two last letters, chides her friend for giving so little weight to her advice, in relation to her behaviour to her mother:—It may be proper to insert here the following extracts from that answer; tho' a little before their time.

‘I will not repeat, says she, what I have before written in Mr. Hickman’s behalf. I will only remind you of an observation I have made to you more than once, that you have outlived your first passion; and had the second man been an angel, he would not have been more than indifferent to you.

‘My motives for suspending, *proceeds she*, were not merely ceremonious ones. I was really very ill. I could not hold up my head. The contents of my sister’s letters had pierced my heart. And was I, my dear, to be as ready to accept his offer, as if I were afraid, he never would repeat it?

To the second letter, among other things, she says:

‘So, my dear, you seem to think, that there was a fate in my error. The cordial, the considering friend, is seen in the observation you make on this occasion. Yet since things have happen’d as they have, would to heaven I could hear, that all the world

‘ world acquitted my father, or, at least, my mother, for her character, before these family-feuds broke out, was every-one’s admiration. Don’t let any-body say from you, so that it may come to *her* ear, that she might, by a timely exertion of her fine talents, have saved her unhappy child. You’ll oblige, my dear, that in her own good time, when she saw that there was not likely to be an end to my brother’s persecution, she was resolved to exert herself. But the pragmatistical daughter, by the fatal meeting, precipitated all, and frustrated her indulgent designs. O my dear, I am now convinced, by dear experience, that while children are so happy as to have parents or guardians, whom they *may* consult, they should not presume (no, not with the best and purest intentions) to follow their own conceits, in material cases.’

‘ A ray of hope of future reconciliation, *adds she*, darts in upon my mind, from the intention you tell me my mother had to exert herself in my favour, had I not gone away. And my hope is the stronger, as this communication points out to me, that my uncle Harlowe’s interest is likely, in my mother’s opinion, to be of weight, if it could be engaged. It will behove me, perhaps, to apply to that dear uncle, if a proper occasion offer.’

LETTER LVIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Monday, April 24.

FATE is weaving a whimsical web for thy friend; and I see not but I shall be inevitably manacled.

Here have I been at work, dig, dig, dig, like a cunning miner, at one time, and spreading my snares, like an artful fowler, at another, and exulting in my contrivances to get this inimitable creature absolutely
into

into my power;—Every thing made for me.—Her brother and uncle were but my pioneers: Her father storm'd as I directed him to storm. Mrs. Howe was acted by the springs I set at work: Her daughter was moving for me, and yet imagin'd herself plump against me: And the dear creature herself had already run her stubborn neck into my gin, and knew not that she was caught; for I had not drawn my springs close about her.—And just as all this was completed, wouldst thou believe, that I should be my own enemy, and her friend?—That I should be so totally diverted from all my favourite purposes, as to propose to marry her before I went to town, in order to put it out of my own power to resume them?

When thou knowest This, wilt thou not think that my black angel plays me booty, and has taken it into his head, to urge me on to the indissoluble tie, that he might be more sure of me (from the complex transgressions to which he will certainly stimulate me, when wedded) than perhaps he thought he could be from the simple sins, in which I have so long allowed myself, that they seem to have the plea of habit?

Thou wilt be still the more surprized, when I tell thee, that there seems to be a coalition going forward between the black angels and the white ones; for here has hers induced her in one hour, and by one retrograde accident, to *acknowledge*, what the charming creature never before acknowledged, a preferable favour for me. She even owns an intention to be mine:—Mine, without reformation-conditions:—She permits me to talk of love to her: Of the irrevocable ceremony: Yet, another extraordinary! postpones that ceremony; chooses to set out for London; and even to go to the widow's in town.

Well, but how comes all this about, methinks thou askest?—Thou Lovelace, dealest in wonders, yet aimest not at the *Marvellous*.—How did all this come about?

I'll

I'll tell thee—I was in danger of losing my charmer for ever. —She was soaring upward to her native skies. She was got above earth, by means too, of the *Earth-born*: And something extraordinary was to be done to keep her with us Sublunaries. And what so effectually as the soothing voice of Love, and the attracting offer of Matrimony from a man not hated, can fix the attention of the maiden heart aking with uncertainty; and before impatient of the questionable question?

This, in short was the case.—While she was refusing all manner of obligation to me, keeping me at haughty distance; in hopes that her cousin Morden's arrival would soon fix her in a full and absolute independence of me: Disgusted likewise at her adorer, for holding himself the reins of his own passions, instead of giving them up to her controul:—She writes a letter, urging an answer to a letter before written, for her apparel, her jewels, and some gold, which she had left behind her; all which was to save her pride from obligation, and to promote the independence her heart was set upon.—And what follow'd but a shocking answer, made still more shocking by the communication of a paternal curse upon a daughter, deserving only blessings?—A curse upon the curser's heart, and a double one upon the transmitter's, the spiteful, the envious Arabella!

Absent when it came; on my return, I found her, recovering from fits, again to fall into stronger fits; and no-body expecting her life; half a dozen messengers dispatch'd to find me out.—Nor wonder at her being so effected; she, whose filial piety gave her dreadful faith in a father's curses; and the curse of this gloomy tyrant extending, to use her own words, when she could speak, *to both worlds*.—O that it had turn'd, in the moment of its utterance, to a mortal quinsy, and sticking in his gullet, had choak'd the old execrator, as a warning to all such unnatural fathers.

What

What a miscreant had I been, not to have endeavoured to bring her back, by all the endearments, by all the vows, by all the offers that I could make her?

I did bring her back. More than a father to her; for I have given her a life her unnatural father had well-nigh taken away; shall I not cherish the fruits of my own benefaction?—I have been in earnest in my vows to marry, and my ardour to urge the present time was a *real* ardour. But extreme dejection, with a mingled delicacy, that in her dying moments I doubt not she will preserve, have caused her to refuse me the *time*, tho' not the solemnity; for she has told me, that now she must be wholly in my protection, *being destitute of every other!*—More indebted still, thou seest, to her cruel friends, than to herself, for her favour!

She has written to Miss Howe an account of their barbarity; but has not acquainted her, how very ill she was.

Low, very low, she remains; yet, dreading her stupid brother's enterprize, she wants to be in London: Where, but for *this* accident, and (wouldst thou have believed it?) my persuasions, seeing her so very ill, she would have been this night; and we shall actually set out on Wednesday morning, if she be not worse.

And now for a few words with thee, on thy heavy preachment of Saturday last.

Thou art apprehensive, that the Lady is now in danger indeed; and it is a miracle thou tellest me, if she stand such an attempter: 'Knowing what we know of the sex, thou sayest, thou shouldst dread, wert thou me, to make farther trial, lest thou shouldst succeed.' And, in another place, tellest me, 'That thou pleadest not for the state, for any favour thou hast for it.'

What an advocate art thou for matrimony!—Thou wert ever an unhappy fellow at argument.

Does the trite stuff with which the rest of thy letter abounds, in *favour* of wedlock, strike with the force that this does *against* it?

Thou takest great pains to convince me, and that from the distresses the Lady is reduced to [chiefly by her friends persecutions and implacableness, I hope thou wilt own, and not from me as yet], that the proposed trial will not be a fair trial. But let me ask thee, is not calamity the test of virtue? And wouldst thou not have me value this charming creature upon proof of her merits?—Do I not intend to reward her by marriage, if she stand that proof?

But why repeat I, what I have said before?—Turn back, thou egregious arguer, turn back to my long letter of the 13th (a); and thou wilt there find every syllable of what thou hast written, either answer'd or invalidated.

But I am not angry with thee, Jack. I love opposition. As gold is try'd by fire, and virtue by temptation; so is sterling wit by opposition. Have I not, before thou settdest out as an advocate for my fair one, often brought thee in, as making objections to my proceedings, for no other reason than to exalt myself by proving thee a man of straw? As Homer raises up many of his companions, and gives them terrible names, only to have them knock'd on the head by his heroes.

However, take to thee this one piece of advice--- Evermore be sure of being in the right, when thou presumest to sit down to correct thy master.

Well, but to return to my principal subject; let me observe, that be my future resolutions what they will, as to this lady, the contents of the violent letter she has received, have set me at least a month forward with her. I can now, as I hinted, talk of Love and Marriage, without controul or restriction; her injunctions no more my terror. In

(a) See Letter xvii. p. 103. to 113. of this Volume.

In this sweetly familiar way shall we set out together for London. Mrs. Sorlings's eldest daughter, at my motion, is to attend her in the chaise; while I ride by way of escorte: For she is extremely apprehensive of the Singleton plot; and has engaged me to be all patience, if any thing should happen on the road. But nothing I am sure *will* happen: For, by a letter received just now from Joseph, I understand, that James Harlowe has already laid aside his stupid project: And This by the earnest desire of all his friends to whom he had communicated it; who were afraid of the consequences that might attend it. But it is not over with *me*, however; altho' I am not determined at present, as to the uses I may make of it.

My beloved tells me, she shall have her cloaths sent her: She hopes also her jewels, and some gold, which she left behind her. But Joseph says, cloaths *only* will be sent. I will not, however, tell her that; On the contrary, I say, there is no doubt, but they will send *all* she wrote for, of personals. The greater her disappointment from them, the greater must be her dependence on me.

But, after all, I hope I shall be enabled to be honest to a merit so transcendent. The devil take thee tho', for thy opinion given so mal-a-propo', that she may be overcome.

If thou designest to be honest, methinks thou say'st, why should not Singleton's plot be over with *thee*, as it is with her *brother*?

Because, if I must answer thee, where people are so modestly doubtful of what they are able to do, it is good to leave a loop-hole. And let me add, that when a man's heart is set upon a point, and any thing occurs to beat him off, he will find it is very difficult, when the suspending reason ceases, to forbear resuming it.

LETTER LIX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday, April 25.

ALL hands at work in preparation for London. What makes my heart beat so strong? Why rises it to my throat, in such half-choaking flutters, when I think of what this removal may do for me? —I am hitherto resolved to be honest: And that increases my wonder at these involuntary commotions. 'Tis a plotting villain of a heart: It ever was; and ever will be, I doubt. Such a joy when any roguery is going forward! —I so little its master! —A head likewise so well turn'd to answer the triangular varlet's impulses. No matter. I will have one struggle with thee, old friend; and if I cannot overcome thee now, I never will again attempt to conquer thee.

The dear creature continues extremely low and dejected. Tender blossom! How unfit to contend with the rude and rustling winds of passion, and haughty and insolent controul! —Never till now from under the wing (it is not enough to say of indulging, but) of *admiring* parents; the mother's bosom only fit to receive the charming flower!

This was the reflection, that, with mingled compassion, and augmented love, arose to my mind, when I beheld the charmer reposing her lovely face upon the bosom of the widow Sorlings, from a recover'd fit, as I entered, soon after she had received her execrable sister's letter. How lovely in her tears! —And as I enter'd, her lifted-up face, significantly bespeaking my protection, as I thought. And can I be a villain to such an angel! —I hope not. —But why, once more, thou varlet, puttest thou me in mind, that she *may* be overcome? And why is her own reliance on my honour so late, and so reluctantly shewn?

But,

But, after all, so low, so dejected, continues she to be, that I am terribly afraid I shall have a vapourish wife, if I *do* marry. I should then be doubly undone. Not that I shall be much at home with her, perhaps, after the first fortnight, or so. But when a man has been ranging, like the painful bee, from flower to flower, perhaps for a month together, and the thoughts of Home and a Wife begin to have their charms with him, to be received by a Niobe, who, like a wounded vine, wipes its vitals away, while it but involuntarily curls about you; how shall I be able to bear That?

May heaven restore my charmer to health and spirits, I hourly pray, that a man may see whether she can love any body but her father and mother! In *their* power, I am confident, it will be at any time, to make her husband joyless; and that, as I hate them so heartily, is a shocking thing to reflect upon: Something *more* than woman, an *angel*, in some things, but a *baby* in others: So father-sick! so family-fond! what a poor chance stands a husband with such a wife, unless, forsooth, they vouchsafe to be reconciled to her, and *continue* reconciled?

It is infinitely better for her and for me, that we should not marry!—What a delightful manner of life (O that I could persuade her to it!) would that be with such a lady! The fears, the inquietudes, the uneasy days, the restless nights; all arising from doubts of having disobliged me! Every absence dreaded to be an absence for ever! And then, how amply rewarded, and rewarding, by the rapture-causing return! Such a passion as this, keeps Love in a continual fervour; makes it all alive. The happy pair, instead of sitting, dozing, and nodding at each other, in two opposite chimney-corners, in a winter-evening, and over a wintry love, always new to each other, and having always something to say.

Thou knowest, in my verses to my Stella, my mind on this occasion. I will lay those verses in her way, as if undesignedly, when we are together at the widow's; that is to say, if we do not soon go to church by consent: She will thence see what my notions are of wedlock. If she receives them with any sort of temper, that will be a foundation; and let *me* alone to build upon it.

Many a girl has been *carried*, who never would have been *attempted*, had she shewed a proper resentment, when her ears or her eyes were first invaded. I have try'd a young creature by a bad book, a light quotation, or an indecent picture; and if she has borne that, or only blush'd, and not been angry, and more-especially if she has leer'd and smil'd, that girl have I, and old Mulciber, put down for our own. O how I could warn these little rogues if I would! Perhaps envy, more than virtue, will put me upon setting up beacons for them, when I grow old and joyless.

Tuesday Afternoon.

If you are in London when I get thither, you will see me soon.—My charmer is a little better than she was. Her eyes shew it, and her harmonious voice, hardly audible last time I saw her, now begins to cheer my heart once more. But yet she has no love, no sensibility!—There is no addressing her with those *meaning*, yet *innocent* freedoms [*innocent*, at first setting out, they may be called] which soften others of her sex. The more strange this, as she now acknowledges preferable favour for me; and is highly susceptible of grief. Grief mollifies and enervates. The grieved mind looks round it, silently implores consolation, and loves the soother. Grief is ever an inmate with Joy. Tho' they won't shew themselves at the same window at *one* time; yet have they the whole house in common between them.

L E T-

LETTER LX.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Wedn. Apr. 26.

A T last my lucky star has directed us into the desired port, and we are safely landed. Well says Rowe:

*The wise and active conquer difficulties
By daring to attempt them. Sloth and folly
Shiver and shrink at sight of toil and hazard,
And make th' impossibility their fear.*

But in the midst of my exultation, something, I know not what to call it, checks my joys, and glooms over my brighter prospects. If it be not conscience, it is wondrously like what I thought so, many, many years ago.

Surely, Lovelace, methinks thou sayst, thy good motions are not gone off already! Surely thou wilt not now at last be a villain to this lady.

I can't tell what to say to it.—Why would not the dear creature accept of me, when I so sincerely offer'd myself to her acceptance? Things already appear with a very different face now I have got her here. Already have our mother and her daughters been about me. 'Charming Lady! What a complexion! What eyes! what majesty in her person!—O Mr. Lovelace, you are a happy man!—You owe us 'such a Lady!'—Then they remind me of my revenge, and of my hatred to her whole family. Sally was so struck with her, at first sight, that she broke out to me in those lines of Dryden:

—— Fairer to be seen
Than the fair lily on the flow'ry green!
More fresh than May herself in blossoms new!—

I sent

I sent to thy lodgings within half an hour after our arrival, to receive thy congratulations upon it: But thou wert at Edgware, it seems.

My beloved, who is charmingly amended, is retired to her constant employment, writing. I must content myself with the same amusement, till she shall be pleased to admit me to her presence: Having already given to every one her cue.

But here comes the widow, with Dorcas Wykes in her hand.—Dorcas Wykes, Jack, is to be the maid-servant to my fair-one; and I am to introduce them both to her. In so many ways will it be in my power to have the dear creature now, that I shall not know which of them to choose!—



So! The honest girl is accepted! Of good parentage: But, thro' a neglected education, plaguy illiterate:—She can neither write, nor read writing. A kinswoman of Mrs. Sinclair's: So could not well be refused, the widow in person recommending her; and the wench only taking till her Hannah can come. What an advantage has an imposing or forward nature over a courteous one!—So here may something arise to lead into correspondencies, and so forth!—To be sure, a person need not be so wary, so cautious of what she writes, or what she leaves upon her table or toilet, when her attendant cannot read.

Dorcas is a neat girl both in person and dress; a countenance not vulgar. And I am in hopes that she accept of her for her bedfellow, in a strange house, for a week or so. But I saw she had a dislike to her at her very first appearance:---Yet I thought the girl behaved very modestly---Over did it a little perhaps!---She shrunk back, and looked shy upon her. The doctrine of sympathies and antipathies is a surprising doctrine.---But Dorcas will be excessively obliging, and win her Lady's favour soon, I doubt not.---I am secure in her *incorruptibility*. A great point that!

that!--For a Lady and her Maid of one party will be too hard for half a score devils.

The dear creature was no less shy when the widow first accosted her, at her alighting. Yet, I thought, that honest Doleman's letter had prepared her for her masculine appearance.

And now I mention that letter, why dost thou not wish me joy, Jack?

Joy of what?

Why, joy of my nuptials.---Know then, that *said*, is *done* with me, when I have a mind to have it so; and that we are actually man and wife. Only that consummation has not passed: Bound down to the contrary of that, by a solemn vow, till a reconciliation with her family take place. The women here are told so. They know it, before my beloved knows it; and that's odd, thou'lt say.

But how shall I do to make my fair-one temperate on the intimation? Why is she not here?---At Mrs. Sinclair's?---But if she will hear reason, I doubt not to convince her, that she ought to acquiesce.

She will insist, I suppose, upon my leaving her, and that I shall not take up my lodgings under the same roof. But circumstances are changed since I first made her that promise. I have taken all the vacant apartments; and must carry this point also.

I hope in a while to get her with me to the public entertainments. She knows nothing of the town, and has seen less of its diversions than ever woman of her taste, her fortune, her endowments, did see. She has indeed a natural politeness, which transcends all acquirement. The most capable of any one I ever knew, of judging what an *hundred* things are, by seeing *one* of a like nature. Indeed she took so much pleasure in her own chosen amusements till persecuted out of them, that she had neither leisure nor inclination for the town diversions.

These

These diversions will amuse. And the duce is in it, if a little susceptibility will not put forth, now she receives my address, and if I can manage it so, as to be allowed to live under *one* roof with her. What tho' the appearance be at first no more than that of an early spring-flower in frosty weather, that seems afraid of being nipped by an easterly blast; that will be enough for me.

I hinted to thee in a former (*a*), that I had provided for the lady's in-door amusement. Sally and Polly are readers. My beloved's light closet was their library. And several pieces of devotion have been put in, bought on purpose, at second-hand.

I was always for forming a judgment of the reading part of the sex by their books. The observations I have made on this occasion have been of great use to me, as well in England as out of it. This sagacious lady may possibly be as curious in this point, as her Lovelace.

So much for the present. Thou seest, that I have a great deal of business before me: Yet I will write again soon.

Mr. Lovelace sends another letter with this; in which he takes notice of young Mrs. Sorlings's setting out with them, and leaving them at Barnet: But as its contents are nearly the same with those in the lady's next, it is omitted.

L E T T E R LXI.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Wedn. P. M. Apr. 26.

AT length, my dearest Miss Howe, I am in London, and in my new lodgings. They are neatly furnished, and the situation, for the town, is pleasant. But, I think, you must not ask me, how I like the old gentlewoman. Yet she seems courteous

(*a*) Letter xxxvii. p. 192.

teous and obliging. Her kinswomen just appeared to welcome me at my alighting. They seem to be genteel young women. But more of their aunt and of them, as I shall see more.

Miss Sorlings has an uncle at Barnet, whom she found so very ill, that her uneasiness to stay to attend him (having large expectations from him) made me comply with her desire. Yet I wished, as her uncle did not expect her, that she would first see me settled in London; and Mr. Lovelace was still more earnest that she would, offering to send her back again in a day or two, and urging, that her uncle's malady intimated not a sudden change. But leaving the matter to her choice, after she knew what would have been mine, she made me not the expected compliment upon it. Mr. Lovelace, however, made her a handsome present at parting.

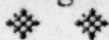
His genteel spirit on all occasions makes me often wish him more consistent.

As soon as I arrived, I took possession of my apartment. Shall make good use of the light closet in it, if I stay here any time.

One of his attendants returns in the morning to the Lawn; and I made writing to you by him, an excuse for my retiring.

And now give me leave to chide you, my dearest friend, for your rash, and I hope revocable resolution, not to make Mr. Hickman the happiest man in the world, while my happiness is in suspense. Suppose I were to be unhappy, what, my dear, would your resolution avail me? Marriage is the highest state of friendship: If happy, it lessens our cares, by dividing them, at the same time that it doubles our pleasures by a mutual participation. Why, my dear, if you love me, will you not rather give another friend to one who has not two that she is sure of?---Had you marry'd on your mother's last birth-day, as she would have had you, I should not, I dare say, have wanted
a refuge,

a refuge, that would have saved me so many mortifications, and so much disgrace.



HERE I was broken in upon by Mr. Lovelace ; introducing the widow leading in a kinswoman of hers to attend me, if I approved of her, till my Hannah should come, or till I had provided myself with some other servant. The widow gave her many good qualities ; but said, that she had one great defect ; which was, that she could not write, nor read writing ; that part of her education having been neglected when she was young : But for discretion, fidelity, obligingness, she was not to be outdone by any-body. She commended her likewise for her skill in the needle.

As for her defect, I can easily forgive that. She is very likely and genteel ; too genteel indeed, I think, for a servant. But what I like least of all in her, she has a strange fly eye. I never saw such an eye :--- Half-confident, I think. But indeed Mrs. Sinclair herself (for that is the widow's name) has an odd winking eye ; and her respectfulness seems too much studied, methinks, for the London ease and freedom. But people can't help their looks, you know ; and after all, she is extremely civil and obliging : And as for the young woman (Dorcas her name), she will not be long with me.

I accepted her : How could I do otherwise (if I had a mind to make objections, which in my present situation I had not), her aunt present, and the young woman also present ; and Mr. Lovelace officious in his introducing of them for my sake ?---But upon their leaving me, I told him, who seem'd inclinable to begin a conversation with me, that I desired that this apartment might be considered as my retirement : That when I saw him, it might be in the dining-room ; and that I might be as little broke in upon as possible, when I am here. He withdrew very respectfully to the door ; but there stopt ; and asked for my
company

company then in the dining-room. If he was about setting out for other lodgings, I would go with him now, I told him: But if he did not just then go, I would first finish my letter to Miss Howe.

I see he has no mind to leave me, if he can help it. My brother's scheme may give him a pretence to try to engage me to dispense with his promise. But if I now do, I must acquit him of it intirely.

My approbation of his tender behaviour in the midst of my grief, has given him a right, as he seems to think, of addressing me with all the freedom of an approved lover. I see by this man, that when once a woman embarks with this sex, there is no receding. One concession is but the prelude to another with them. He has been ever since Sunday last continually complaining of the distance I keep him at, and thinks himself intitled now, to call in question my value for him; strengthening his doubts by my declared readiness to give him up to a reconciliation with my friends—And yet has himself fallen off from that *obsequious tendernefs*, if I may couple the words, which drew from me the concessions he builds upon.

While we were talking at the door, my new servant came up, with an invitation to us both to tea. I said *he* might accept of it, if he pleased; but I must pursue my writing; and not choosing either tea or supper, I desired him to make my excuses below, as to both; and inform them of my choice to be retired as much as possible; yet to promise for me my attendance on the widow and her nieces at breakfast in the morning.

He objected particularly in the eye of strangers, as to avoiding supper.

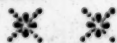
You know, said I, and can tell them, that I seldom eat suppers. My spirits are low. You must never urge me against a declared choice. Pray, Mr. Lovelace, inform them of all my particularities. If

they are obliging, they will allow for them. I come not here to make new acquaintance.

I have turned over the books I have found in my closet; and am not a little pleased with them; and think the better of the people of the house for their sakes.

Stanhope's Gospel's; Sharp's, Tillotson's, and South's Sermons; Nelson's Feasts and Fasts; a Sacramental piece of the Bishop of Man, and another of Dr. Gauden, Bishop of Exeter; and Inett's Devotions; are among the devout books: And among those of a lighter turn, these not ill-chosen ones; A Telemachus in French, another in English; Steele's, Rowe's, and Shakespeare's Plays; that genteel Comedy of Mr. Cibber, The Careless Husband, and others of the same author; Dryden's Miscellanies; the Tattlers, Spectators, and Guardians; Pope's, and Swift's, and Addison's Works.

In the blank leaves of the Nelson and Bishop Gauden, is Mrs Sinclair's name; in those of most of the others, either Sarah Martin, or Mary Horton, the names of the two nieces.



I AM exceedingly out of humour with Mr. Lovelace: And have great reason to be so: As you will allow when you have read the conversation I am going to give you an account of; for he would not let me rest till I gave him my company in the dining-room.

He began with letting me know, that he had been out to inquire after the character of the widow; which was the more necessary, he said, as he supposed that I would *expect* his frequent absence.

I did, I said; and that he would not think of taking up his lodging in the same house with me. But what was the issue of his inquiry?

Why,

Why, indeed, it was, in the main, what he liked well enough. But as it was Miss Howe's opinion, as I had told him, that my brother had not given over his scheme; as the widow lived by letting lodgings; and had others to let in the same part of the house, which might be taken by an enemy; he knew no better way, than for him to take them all, as it could not be for a long time; unless I would think of removing to others.

So far was well enough: But as it was easy for me to see, that he spoke the slighter of the widow, in order to have a pretence to lodge here himself, I asked him his intention in that respect. And he frankly owned, that if I chose to stay here, he could not, as matters stood, think of leaving me for six hours together; and he had prepared the widow to expect, that we should be here but for a few days;—only till we could fix ourselves in a house suitable to our condition; and this, that I might be under the less embarrass, if I pleased to remove.

Fix *our-selves* in a house, and *we* and *our*, Mr. Lovelace—Pray, in what light—

He interrupted me,—Why, my dearest life, if you will hear me with patience—Yet I am half afraid, that I have been too forward, as I have not consulted you upon it.—But as my friends in town, according to what Mr. Doleman has written, in the letter you have seen, conclude us to be marry'd—

Surely, Sir, you have not presumed—

Hear me out, dearest creature—You have received with favour my addresses—You have made me hope for the honour of your consenting hand: Yet, by declining my most fervent tender of myself to you at Mrs. Sorlings's, have given me apprehensions of delay: I would not for the world be thought so ungenerous a wretch, now you have honoured me with your confidence, as to wish to precipitate you: Yet your brother's schemes are not given up. Singleton, I am afraid, is

actually in town; his vessel lies at Rotherhith—Your brother is absent from Harlowe-place [indeed not with Singleton yet, as I can hear]. If you are *known* to be mine, or if you are but *thought* to be so, there will probably be an end of your brother's contrivances. The widow's character may be as worthy as it is said to be. But the worthier she is, the more danger, if your brother's agent should find us out; since she may be persuaded, that she ought in conscience to take a parent's part, against a child who stands in opposition to them. But if she believes us married, her good character will stand us in stead, and she will be of our party.—Then I have taken care to give her a reason why two apartments are requisite for us, at the hour of retirement.

I perfectly raved at him. I would have flung from him in resentment; but he would not let me: And what could I do? Whither go, the evening advanced?

I am astonish'd at you! said I:—If you are a man of honour, what need of all this strange obliquity? You delight in crooked ways.—Let me know, since I must stay in your company (for he held my hand), let me know all you have said.—Indeed, indeed, Mr. Lovelace, you are a very unaccountable man.

My dearest creature, need I to have mentioned any thing of this; and could I not have taken up my lodgings in this house, unknown to you, if I had not intended to make you the judge of all my proceedings? —But this is what I have told the widow before her kinswomen, and before your new servant,—That indeed we were privately married at Hertford; but that you had preliminary bound me under solemn vow, which I am most religiously resolved to keep, to be contented with separate apartments, and even not to lodge under the same roof, till a certain reconciliation shall take place, which is of high consequence to both. And further, that I might convince you of the purity
of

of my intentions, and that my whole view in this was to prevent mischief, I have acquainted them, that I have solemnly promised to behave to you before every body, as if we were only betrothed, and not married; not even offering to take any of those innocent freedoms which are not refused in the most punctilious loves.

And then he solemnly vowed to me the strictest observance of the same respectful behaviour to me.

I told him, that I was not by any means satisfied with the tale he had told, nor with the necessity he wanted to lay me under, of appearing what I was not: The very step he took was a wry one, a needless wry one: And since he thought it necessary to tell the people below any thing about me, I insisted, that he should unsay all he had said, and tell them the truth.

What he had told them, he said, was with so many circumstances, that he could sooner die than contradict it. And still he insisted upon the propriety of appearing to be married, for the reasons he had given before.—And, dearest creature, said he, why this high displeasure with me upon so well-intended an expedient? You know, that I cannot wish to shun your brother, or his Singleton, but upon your account. The first step I would take, if left to myself, would be to find them out. I have always acted in this manner when any-body has presumed to give out threatnings against me.

'Tis true, I should have consulted you first, and had your leave. But since you dislike what I have said, let me implore you, dearest Madam, to give the only proper sanction to it, by naming an early day. Would to heaven that were to be to-morrow!—For God's sake, let it be to-morrow! But if not [Was it his business, my dear, before I spoke (yet he seemed to be afraid of me), to say, if not?], let me beseech you, Madam, if my behaviour shall not be to your
C c 3 dislike,

dislike, that you will not to-morrow at breakfast-time, discredit what I have told them. The moment I give you cause to think, that I take any advantage of your concession, that moment revoke it, and expose me, as I shall deserve.——And once more, let me remind you, that I have no view either to serve or save myself by this expedient.——It is only to prevent a probable mischief, for your own mind's sake; and for the sake of those who deserve not the least consideration from me.

What could I say? What could I do?—I verily think, that had he urged me again, in a proper manner, I should have consented (little satisfy'd as I am with him) to give him a meeting to-morrow morning at a more solemn place than in the parlour below.

But this I resolve, that he shall not have my consent to stay a night under this roof. He has now given me a stronger reason for this determination than I had before.



ALAS! my dear, how vain a thing to say, what we will, or what we will not do, when we have put ourselves into the power of this sex!—He went down to the people below, on my desiring to be left to myself; and stayed till their supper was just ready; and then, desiring a moment's *audience*, as he called it, he besought my leave to stay that one night, promising to set out either for Lord M's, or for Edgware, to his friend Belford's, in the morning after breakfast. But if I were against it, he said, he would not stay supper; and would attend me about eight next day.—Yet he added, that my denial would have a very particular appearance to the people below, from what he had told them; and the more, as he had actually agreed for all the vacant apartments (indeed only for a month), for the reason he had before hinted at: But I need not stay here two days, if, upon conversing
with

with the widow and her nieces in the morning, I should have any dislike to them.

I thought, notwithstanding my resolution above-mentioned, that it would seem too punctilious to deny him; under the circumstances he had mentioned:— Having, besides, no reason to think he would obey me; for he looked, as if he were determined to debate the matter with me. And, as now, I see no likelihood of a reconciliation with my friends, and had actually received his addresses with less reserve than ever; I thought I would not quarrel with him, if I could help it, especially as he asked to stay but for one night, and could have done so without my knowing it; and you being of opinion, that the proud wretch, distrusting his own merits with me, or at least my regard for him, will probably bring me to some concessions in his favour: For all these reasons, I thought proper to yield *this* point; yet I was so vexed with him on the *other*, that it was impossible for me to comply with that grace which a concession should be made with, or not made at all.

This was what I said.—What you *will* do, you *must* do, I think. You are very ready to promise; very ready to depart from your promise. You say, however, that you will set out to-morrow for the country. You know how ill I have been. I am not well enough now to debate with you upon your in-croaching ways. I am utterly dissatisfied with the tale you have told below. Nor will I promise to appear to the people of the house to-morrow, what I am not.

He withdrew, in the most respectful manner, beseeching me only to favour him with such a meeting in the morning, as might not make the widow and her nieces think he had given me reason to be offended with him.

I retired to my own apartment, and Dorcas came to me soon after to take my commands. I told her, that

I re-

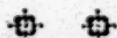
I required very little attendance, and always dressed and undressed myself.

She seemed concerned, as if she thought I had repulsed her, and said, it should be her whole study to oblige me.

I told her, that I was not difficult to please. And should let her know from time to time what assistances I should expect from her. But for that night I had no occasion for her further attendance.

She is not only genteel, but is well-bred, and well-spoken.—She must have had what is generally thought to be the polite part of education: But it is strange, that fathers and mothers should make so light, as they generally do, of that preferable part, in girls, which would improve their minds, and give a grace to all the rest.

As soon as she was gone, I inspected the doors, the windows, the wainscot, the dark closet as well as the light one; and finding very good fastenings to the door, and to all the windows, I again had recourse to my pen.



MRS. SINCLAIR is just now gone from me. Dorcas, she told me, had acquainted her, that I had dismissed her for the night. She came to ask me how I liked my apartment, and to wish me good rest. She expressed her concern, that they could not have my company at supper. Mr. Lovelace, she said, had informed them of my love of retirement. She assured me, that I should not be broken in upon. She highly extolled him, and gave me a share in the praise, as to person. But was sorry, she said, that she was likely to lose us so soon as Mr. Lovelace talked of.

I answered her with suitable civility; and she withdrew with great tokens of respect. With greater, I think, than should be from distance of years, as she was the wife of a gentleman; and as the appearance
of

of every thing about her, as well house as dress, carries the marks of such good circumstances, as require not abasement.

If, my dear, you *will* write against prohibition, be pleased to direct, *To Miss Lætitia Beaumont; To be left till called for, at Mr. Wilson's in Pall-Mall.*

Mr. Lovelace proposed this direction to me, not knowing of your desire that our letters should pass by a third hand. As his motive for it was, that my brother might not trace out where we are, I am glad, as well from this instance, as from others, that he seems to think he has done mischief enough already.

Do you know how my poor Hannah does?

Mr. Lovelace is so full of his contrivances and expedients, that I think it may not be amiss to desire you to look carefully to the seals of my letters, as I shall to those of yours. If I find him base in this particular, I shall think him capable of any evil; and will fly him as my worst enemy.

L E T T E R LXII.

Miss Howe, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

[With her two last Letters, N^o. lvi. lvii. inclosed.]

Thursday Night, April 27.

I Have yours, just brought me. Mr. Hickman has helped me to a lucky expedient, which, with the assistance of the post, will enable me to correspond with you every day. An honest higgler (Simon Collins his name), by whom I shall send this, and the two inclosed (now I have your direction where), goes to town constantly on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, and can bring back to me from Wilson's what you shall have caused to be left for me.

I congratulate you on your arrival in town, so much amended in spirits. I must be brief. I hope you'll have

have no cause to repent returning my Norris. It is forth-coming on demand.

I am sorry your Hannah can't be with you. She is very ill still; but not in danger.

I long for your account of the women you are with. If they are not right people, you'll find them out in one breakfasting.

I know not what to write upon his reporting to them, that you are actually married. His reasons for it are plausible. But he delights in odd expedients and inventions.

Whether you like the people or not, don't, by your noble sincerity and plain-dealing, make yourself enemies. You are in the world now, you know.

I am glad you had thoughts of taking him at his offer, If he had re-urged it. I wonder he did not. But if he don't soon, and in such a way as you can accept of it, don't think of staying with him.

Depend upon it, my dear, he will not leave you, either night or day, if he can help it, now he has got footing.

I should have abhorred him for his report of your marriage, had he not made it with such circumstances, as leave it still in your power to keep him at distance. If once he offer at the least familiarity—But this is needless to say to you. He can have, I think, no other design, but what he professes; because he must needs think, that his report must increase your vigilance.

You may depend upon my looking narrowly into the sealings of your letters. If, as you say, he be base in that point, he will be so in every-thing. But to one of your merit, of your fortune, of your virtue, he cannot be base. The man is no fool. It is his interest, as well with regard to his expectations from his own friends, as from you, to be honest. Would to heaven, however, that you were really married! This is the predominant wish of

Your ANNA HOWE.
L E T-

LETTER LXIII.

*Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.**Thursday Morning, Eight o'Clock.*

I Am more and more displeased with Mr. Lovelace, on reflection, for his boldness in hoping to make me, tho' but *passively*, as I may say, testify to his great untruth. And I shall like him still less for it, if his view in it does not come out to be the hope of accelerating my resolution in his favour, by the difficulty it will lay me under as to my behaviour to him. He has sent me his compliments by Dorcas, with a request that I will permit him to attend me in the dining-room; perhaps, that he may guess from thence, whether I will meet him in good-humour, or not: But I have answered, that as I shall see him at breakfast-time, I desire to be excused.

Ten o'Clock.

I TRY'D to adjust my countenance before I went down, to an easier air than I had a heart, and was received with the highest tokens of respect by the widow, and her two nieces: Agreeable young women enough in their persons; but they seemed to put on an air of reserve; while Mr. Lovelace was easy and free to all, as if he were of long acquaintance with them: gracefully enough, I cannot but say; an advantage which travelled gentlemen have over other people.

The widow, in the conversation we had after breakfast, gave us an account of the military merit of the colonel her husband; and, upon this occasion, put up her handkerchief to her eye twice or thrice. I hope, for the sake of her sincerity, she wetted it, because she would be thought to have done so; but I saw not that she did. She wish'd that I might never know the loss of a husband so dear to me, as her dear colonel was to her: And again she put her handkerchief to her eyes.

It

It must, no doubt, be a most affecting thing to be separated from a good husband, and to be left in difficult circumstances besides, and that not by *his* fault, and exposed to the insults of the base and ingrateful; as she represented her case to be at his death. This moved me a good deal in her favour.

You know, my dear, that I have an open and free heart, and naturally have as open and free a countenance; at least my complimenters have told me so. At once, where I like, I mingle minds without reserve, encouraging reciprocal freedoms, and am forward to dissipate diffidences. But with these two young gentlewomen, I never can be intimate—I don't know why.

Only, that circumstances, and what passed in conversation, encouraged not the notion, or I should have been apt to think, that the young gentlewomen and Mr. Lovelace were of longer acquaintance than yesterday. For he, by stealth, as it were, cast glances sometimes at them, which they returned; and, on my ocular notice, their eyes fell, as I may say, under my eye, as if they could not stand its examination.

The widow directed all her talk to me, as to Mrs. Lovelace; and I, with a very ill grace, bore it. And once she expressed, more forwardly than I thank'd her for, her wonder, that any vow, any consideration, however weighty, could have force enough with so charming a couple, as she called him and me, to make us keep separate beds.

Their eyes, upon this hint, had the advantage of mine. Yet was I not conscious of guilt. How know I then, upon recollection, that my censures upon theirs are not too rash? There are no doubt, many truly modest Persons (putting myself out of the question), who, by blushes at an injurious charge, have been suspected by those who cannot distinguish between the confusion which guilt will be attended

tended with, and the noble consciousness that overspreads the face of a fine spirit, to be thought but capable of an imputed evil.

The great Roman, as we read, who took his surname from one part in three (the fourth not then discovered) of the world he had triumphed over, being charged with a mean crime to his soldiery, chose rather to suffer exile (the punishment due to it, had he been found guilty), than to have it said, that Scipio was questioned in public, on so scandalous a charge. And think you, my dear, that Scipio did not blush with indignation, when the charge was first communicated to him?

Mr. Lovelace, when the widow expressed her forward wonder, looked sly and leering, as if to observe how I took it; and said, they might observe that his regard for my will and pleasure, calling me his dear creature, had greater force upon him, than the oath by which he had bound himself.

Rebuking both him and the widow, I said, It was strange to me to hear an oath or vow so lightly treated, as to have it thought but of *second* consideration, whatever were the first.

The observation was just, Miss Martin said; for that nothing could excuse the breaking of a solemn vow, be the occasion of making it what it would.

I asked after the nearest church; for I have been too long a stranger to the sacred worship. They named St. James's, St. Anne's, and another in Bloomsbury; and the two nieces said, they oftenest went to St. James's church, because of the good company, as well as for the excellent preaching.

Mr. Lovelace said, the Royal Chapel was the place he oftenest went to, when in town: Poor man! little did I expect to hear he went to any place of devotion. I asked, If the presence of the visible king of, comparatively, but a small territory, did not take off, too generally, the requisite attention to the service of

the invisible King and Maker of a thousand worlds?

He believed this might be so with such as came for curiosity, when the royal family were present. But, otherwise, he had seen as many contrite faces at the Royal Chapel, as any-where else: And why not? Since the people about Courts have as deep scores to wipe off, as any people whatsoever.

He spoke this with so much levity, that I could not help saying, That no-body questioned but he knew how to choose his company.

Your servant, my dear, bowing, were his words; and turning to them, You will observe, upon numberless occasions, ladies, as we are further acquainted, that my beloved never spares me upon these topics. But I admire her as much in her reproofs, as I am fond of her approbation.

Miss Horton said, There was a time for every-thing. She could not but say, that she thought innocent mirth was mighty becoming in young people.

Very true, joined in Miss Martin. And Shakespeare says well, *That youth is the spring of life, The bloom of gawdy years*; with a theatrical air she spoke it: And for her part, she could not but admire in my spouse, that charming vivacity which so well suited his time of life.

Mr. Lovelace bowed. The man is fond of praise. More fond of it, I doubt, than of deserving it. Yet this sort of praise he does deserve. He has, you know, an easy free manner, and no bad voice: And this praise so expanded his gay heart, that he sung the following lines, from Congreve, as he told us:

*Youth does a thousand pleasures bring,
Which from decrepit age will fly;
Sweets that wanton in the bosom of the spring,
In winter's cold embraces die.*

And this for a compliment, as he said, to the two nieces. Nor was it thrown away upon them. They
encored

encored it; and his compliance fix'd them in my memory.

We had some talk about meals; and the widow very civilly offer'd to conform to any rules I would set her. I told her, how easily I was pleased, and how much I chose to dine by myself, and that from a plate sent me from any single dish. But I will not trouble you with such particulars.

They thought me very singular; and with reason: But as I liked them not so very well as to forego my own choice in compliment to them, I was the less concerned for what they thought. And still the less, as Mr. Lovelace had put me very much out of humour with him.

They, however, caution'd me against melancholy. I said, I should be a very unhappy creature, if I could not bear my own company.

Mr. Lovelace said, That he must let the ladies into my story; and then they would know how to allow for my ways. But, *my dear, as you love me*, said the confident wretch, give as little way to melancholy as possible. Nothing but the sweetness of your temper, and your high notions of a duty that can never be deserved where you place it, can make you so uneasy as you are.—Be not angry, *my dear love*, for saying so (seeing me frown, I suppose :) And snatched my hand, and kissed it.

I left him with them; and retired to my closet and my pen.

Just as I have wrote thus far, I am interrupted by a message from him, that he is setting out on a journey, and desires to take my commands.—So here I will leave off, to give him a meeting in the dining-room.



I WAS not displeased to see him in his riding dress.

He seemed desirous to know how I liked the gentlewomen below. I told him, that altho' I did not think them very exceptionable, yet as I wanted not,

in my present situation, new acquaintance, I should not be fond of cultivating theirs; and he must second me, particularly in my desire of breakfasting and supping (when I *did* sup) by myself.

If I would have it so, to be sure it should be so. The people of the house were not of consequence enough to be apologiz'd to, in any point where my pleasure was concerned. And if I should dislike them still more on further knowledge of them, he hoped I would think of some other lodgings.

He expressed a good deal of regret at leaving me, declaring that it was absolutely in obedience to my commands: But that he could not have consented to go, while my brother's schemes were on foot, if I had not done him the credit of my countenance in the report he had made that we were marry'd; which, he said, had bound all the family to his interest, so that he could leave me with the greater security and satisfaction.

He hoped, he said, that on his return, I would name his happy day; and the rather as I might be convinced, by my brother's projects, that no reconciliation was to be expected.

I told him, that perhaps I might write one letter to my uncle Harlowe. He once loved me. I should be easier when I had made one direct application. I might possibly propose such terms, in relation to my grandfather's estate, as might procure me their attention; and I hoped he would be long enough absent to give me time to write to him, and receive an answer from him.

That, he must beg my pardon, he could not promise. He would inform himself of Singleton's and my brother's motions; and if on his return, he found no reason for apprehensions, he would go directly to Berks, and endeavour to bring up with him his cousin Charlotte, who, he hoped, would induce me to give him an earlier day, than at present I seemed to think of.

I told

I told him, that I would take that young lady's company for a great favour.

I was the more pleased with this motion, as it came from himself.

He earnestly pressed me to accept of a bank note: But I declined it. And then he offer'd me his servant William for my attendant in his absence; who, he said, might be dispatched to him, if any thing extraordinary fell out. I consented to that.

He took his leave of me, in the most respectful manner, only kissing my hand. He left the note unobserv'd by me upon the table. You may be sure I shall give it him back at his return.

I am now in a much better humour with him than I was. Where doubts of any person are removed, a mind, not ungenerous, is willing, by way of amends for having conceived those doubts, to construe everything that happens *capable* of a good construction, in that person's favour. Particularly, I cannot but be pleased to observe, that altho' he speaks of the ladies of his family with the freedom of relationship, yet it is always with tenderness. And from a man's kindness to his relations of the sex, a woman has some reasons to expect his good behaviour to herself, when married, if she be willing to deserve it from him. And thus, my dear, am I brought to such a pass, as to sit myself down satisfy'd with this man, where I find room to infer, that he is not naturally a savage.

May you, my dear friend, be always happy in your reflections, prays

Your ever-affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace in his next letter triumphs on his having carried his two great points of making the lady yield to pass for his wife to the people of the house, and to his taking up his lodging in it, tho' but for one night. He is now sure, he says, that he shall

soon prevail, if not by persuasion, by surprize. Yet he pretends to have some little remorse, and censures himself as acting the part of the grand tempter. But having succeeded thus far, he cannot, he says, forbear trying, according to the resolution he had before made, whether he cannot go farther.

He gives the particulars of their debates on the above-mentioned subjects, to the same effect as in the lady's last letters.

It will by this time be seen, that his whole merit with regard to this lady, lies in doing justice to her excellencies both in mind and person, by acknowledgement, tho' to his own condemnation. Thus he begins his succeeding letter.

' And now, Belford, will I give thee an account of our first breakfast conversation.'

' All sweetly serene and easy was the lovely brow and charming aspect of my goddess, on her descending to us; commanding reverence from every eye; a courtesy from every knee; and silence, awful silence, from every quivering lip. While she, arm'd with conscious worthiness and superiority, looked and behaved, as an empress would among her vassals; yet with a freedom from pride and haughtiness, as if born to dignity, and to a behaviour habitually gracious.'

He takes notice of the jealousy, pride and vanity of Sally Martin and Polly Horton, on his respectful behaviour to her. Creatures who, brought up too high for their fortunes, and to a taste of pleasure, and the public diversions, had fallen an easy prey to his seducing arts; and for some time past, been associates with Mrs. Sinclair: And who, as he observes, had not yet got over that distinction in their love, which makes a woman prefer one man to another.

' How difficult is it, says he, to make a woman subscribe to a preference against herself, tho' ever so visible; especially where love is concerned?

' This

‘ This violent, this partial little devil, Sally, has the
‘ insolence to compare herself with an angel——yet
‘ owns her to be an angel. I charge you, Mr. Love-
‘ lace, said she, shew none of your extravagant acts
‘ of kindness before me, to this sullen, this gloomy
‘ beauty!—I cannot bear it.—Then her first sacri-
‘ fices were remember’d—What a rout do these wo-
‘ men make about nothing at all! Were it not for
‘ what the learned bishop, in his letter from Italy,
‘ calls the delicacy of intrigue, what is there, Bel-
‘ ford, in all they can do for us? ——

‘ How do these creatures endeavour to stimulate
‘ me! A fallen woman, Jack, is a worse devil than
‘ even a profligate man. The former is above all re-
‘ morse: That am not I——Nor ever shall they pre-
‘ vail upon me, tho’ aided by all the powers of dark-
‘ ness, to treat this admirable creature with indignity
‘ —So far, I mean, as indignity can be separated from
‘ the trials, which will prove her to be either woman
‘ or angel.

‘ Yet with them I am a craven: I might have had
‘ her before now, if I would: If I would treat her as
‘ flesh and blood, I should find her such: They
‘ thought that I knew, if any man living did, that to
‘ make a goddess of a woman, she would assume the
‘ goddess; to give her power, she would act up to it
‘ to the giver, it to no-body else—And D—r’s wife is
‘ thrown into my dish, who, thou knowest, kept her
‘ over-ceremonious husband at haughty distance, and
‘ whined in private to her insulting footman.—O how
‘ I cursed the blaspheming wretches!——They will
‘ make me, as I tell them, hate their house; and never
‘ rest, till I remove her.——And by my soul, Jack, I
‘ begin to repent already, that I have brought her
‘ hither—And yet, without knowing their hearts, she
‘ resolves against having any more conversation with
‘ them than she can avoid. This I am not sorry for;
‘ since

‘ since jealousy in woman is not to be concealed from woman. And Sally has no command of herself.’

L E T T E R LXIV.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Friday, April 28.

MR. Lovelace is returned already. My brother’s projects were his pretence. I could not but look upon this short absence as an evasion of his promise; especially as he had taken such precautions with the people below; and as he knew that I proposed to keep close within doors. I cannot bear to be dealt meanly with, and angrily insisted, that he should directly set out for Berkshire, in order to engage his cousin, as he had promised.

O my dearest life, said he, why will you banish me from your presence?—I cannot leave you for so long a time, as you seem to expect I should. I have been hovering about town, ever since I left you. Edgware was the furthest place I went to; and there I was not able to stay two hours, for fear, at this crisis, any thing should happen. Who can account for the workings of an apprehensive mind, when all that is dear and valuable to it is at stake—You may spare yourself the trouble of writing to any of your friends till the happy ceremony is passed, that shall intitle me to give weight to your application. When they know we are marry’d, your brother’s plots will be at an end; and your father and mother, and uncles, must be reconciled to you.—Why then should you hesitate a moment to confirm my happiness?—Why, once more, would you banish me from you? Why will you not give the man, who has brought you into difficulties, and who so honourably wishes to extricate you from them, the happiness of doing so?

He

He was silent. My voice failed to second the inclination I had to say something not wholly discouraging to a point so ardently pressed.

I'll tell you my angel, resumed he, what I propose to do, if you approve of it. I will instantly go out to view some of the handsome new squares, or fine streets round them, and make a report to you of any suitable house I find to be let. I will take such a one as you shall choose, furnish it, and set up an equipage befitting our condition. You shall direct the whole. And on some early day, either before or after we fix (it must be at your own choice) be pleas'd to make me the happiest of men. And then will every thing be in a desirable train. You shall receive in your own house (if it can be so soon furnish'd as I wish) the congratulations of all my relations: Charlotte shall visit you in the interim: And if it take up time, you shall choose whom you'll honour with your company, first, second, or third, in the summer months; and on your return, you shall find all that was wanting in your new habitation supply'd; and pleasures in a constant round shall attend us. O my angel, take me to you, instead of banishing me from you, and make me yours for ever.

You see, my dear, that here was no day pressed for. I was not uneasy about that; and the sooner recovered myself, as there was not. But, however I gave him no reason to upbraid me for refusing his offer of going in search of a house.

He is accordingly gone out for this purpose. But I find, that he intends to take up his lodging here to-night; and if to-night, no doubt, on other nights, when he is in town. As the doors and windows of my apartment have good fastenings; as he has not, in all this time, given me cause for apprehension; as he has the pretence of my brother's schemes to plead; as the people below are very courteous and obliging; Miss Morton especially, who seems to have
taken

taken a great liking to me, and to be of a gentler temper and manners, than Miss Martin; and as we are now in a tolerable way; I imagine, it would look particular to them all, and bring me into a debate with a man, who, let him be set upon what he will, has always a great deal to say for himself, if I insisted upon his promise: On all these accounts, I think, I will take no notice of his lodging here, if he don't.

Let me know, my dear, your thoughts of every thing. You may believe I gave him back his note the moment I saw him.

Friday evening.

MR. Lovelace has seen two or three houses; but none to his mind. But he has heard of one which looks promising he says, and which he is to inquire about in the morning.

Saturday morning.

HE has made his inquiries, and actually seen the house he was told of last night. The owner of it is a young widow lady, who is inconsolable for the death of her husband, Fretchville her name. It is furnished quite in taste, every thing being new within these six months. He believes, if I like not the furniture, the use of it may be agreed for, with the house, for a time certain: But if I like it, he will endeavour to take the one, and purchase the other, directly.

The lady sees no-body; nor are the best apartments above-stairs to be view'd till she is either absent, or gone into the country, where she proposes to live retired; and which she talks of doing in a fortnight or three weeks at farthest.

What Mr. Lovelace saw of the house (which were the salon and two parlours) was perfectly elegant; and he was assured, all is of a piece. The offices are also very convenient; coach-house and stables at hand.

He

He shall be very impatient, he says, till I see the whole; nor will he, if he finds he can have it, look farther till I have seen it, except any thing else offer to my liking. The price he values not.

He has just now received a letter from Lady Betty Lawrance, by a particular hand; the contents principally relating to an affair she has in Chancery. But in the postscript she is pleased to say very respectful things of me. They are all impatient, she says, for the happy day being over; which they flatter themselves will *ensure his reformation*.

He hoped, he told me, that I would soon enable him to answer *their* wishes, and *his own*. But, altho' the opportunity was so inviting, he urged not for the day. Which is the more extraordinary, as he was so pressing for marriage before we came to town.

He was very earnest with me to give him, and four of his friends, my company on Monday evening at a little collation. Miss Martin and Miss Horton cannot, he says, be there, being engaged in a party of their own, with two daughters of Colonel Solcombe, and two nieces of Sir Anthony Holmes, upon an annual occasion. But Mrs. Sinclair will be present, and she gave him hope also of the company of a young maiden lady of very great fortune and merit (Miss Partington), to whom Colonel Sinclair, it seems, in his life-time, was guardian, and who therefore calls Mrs. Sinclair mamma.

I desired to be excused. He had laid me, I said, under a most disagreeable necessity of appearing as a married person; and I would see as few people as possible who were to think me so.

He would not urge it, he said, if I were *much* averse: But they were his select friends, men of birth and fortune; who long'd to see me. It was true, that they, as well as his friend Doleman, believed we were married: But they thought him under the restrictions that he had mentioned to the people below.

I might

I might be assured, he told me, that his politeness before them should be carried into the highest degree of reverence.

When he is set upon any thing, there is no knowing, as I have said heretofore, what one *cando*. But I will not, if I can help it, be made a shew of; especially to men of whose characters and principles I have no good opinion. I am, my dearest friend,

Your ever-affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

Mr. Lovelace, in his next letter to his friend Mr. Belford, recites the most material passages in hers preceding. He invites him to his collation on Monday evening.

Mowbray, Belton, and Tourville, *says he*, long to see my angel, and will be there. She has refused me; but must be present notwithstanding. And then will I shew thee the pride and glory of the Harlowe family, my implacable enemies; and thou shalt join with me in my triumph over them all.

If I can procure you this honour, you'll be ready to laugh out, as I have often much ado to forbear, at the puritanical behaviour of the mother before this lady. Not an oath, not a curse, nor the least free word, escapes her lips. She minces in her gait. She primes up her horse-mouth. Her voice, which when she pleases, is the voice of thunder, is sunk into an humble whine. Her stiff hams, that have not been bent to a civility for ten years past, are now limber'd into courtesies three-deep at every word. Her fat arms are cross'd before her; and she can hardly be prevailed upon to sit, in the presence of my goddess.

I am drawing up instructions for ye all to observe on Monday night. It will be thy care, who art a parading fellow, and pretendest to wisdom, to keep the rest from blundering.

Satur-

Saturday night.

MOST confoundedly alarm'd.—Lord, Sir, what do you think? cry'd Dorcas—My lady is resolv'd to go to church to-morrow! I was at quadrille with the women below.—To church! said I, and down I laid my cards. *To church!* repeated they, each looking upon the other. We had done playing for that night. Who could have dreamt of such a whim as this?—Without notice, without questions! Her cloaths not come! No leave asked!—Impossible she should think to be my wife!—Why, this lady don't consider, if she go to church, I must go too!—Yet not to ask for my company!—Her brother and Singleton ready to snap her up, as far as she knows!—Known by her cloaths! Her person, her features, so distinguish'd!—Not such another woman in England! To church of all places:—Is the devil in the girl, said I? as soon as I could speak.

Well, but to leave this subject till to-morrow morning, I will now give you the instructions I have drawn up for yours and your companions behaviour on Monday night.

Instructions to be observed by John Belford, Richard Mowbray, Thomas Belton, and James Tourville, Esquires of the body to General Robert Lovelace, on their admission to the presence of his goddesses.

Then follow his humorous instructions:—In which he cautions them to avoid all obscene hints, and even the double entendre.

You know, says he, that I never permitted any of you to talk obscenely. Time enough for that, when ye grow old, and can *only* talk. What! as I have often said, cannot you touch a woman's heart, without wounding her ear?

VOL. III.

E e

I need

I need not bid you respect me mightily. Your allegiance obliges you to that. And who, that sees me, respects me not?

He gives them their cue as to Miss Partington, and her history and assumed character.

So noted, says he, for innocent looks, yet deep discretion!---And be sure to remember, that my beloved has no name but mine; and that the mother has no other than her maiden name, *Sinclair*; her husband a lieutenant-colonel.

Many other whimsical particulars he gives, and then says,

This dear lady is prodigiously learned in *Theories*: But as to *Practices*, as to *Experimentals*, must be, as you know, from her tender years, a mere novice. Till she knew me, I dare say, she did not believe, whatever she had read, that there were such fellows in the world, as she'll see in you four. I shall have much pleasure in observing how she'll stare at her company, when she finds me the politest man of the five.

And so much for instructions general and particular for your behaviour on Monday night.

And now, methinks, thou art curious to know, what can be my view, in risking the displeasure of my fair one, and alarming her fears, after four or five halcyon days have gone over our heads? --- I'll satisfy thee.

The visitors of the two nieces will croud the house. Beds will be scarce. Miss Partington, a sweet modest genteel girl, will be prodigiously taken with my charmer; will want to begin a friendship with her. A share in her bed for one night only, will be requested. Who knows, but on that very Monday night I may be so unhappy, as to give mortal offence

to my beloved? The shyest birds may be caught napping. Should she attempt to fly me upon it, cannot I detain her? Should she actually fly, cannot I bring her back by authority, civil or uncivil, if I have evidence upon evidence, that she acknowledged, tho' but tacitly, her marriage?---And should I, or should I not succeed, and she forgive me, or if she but descend to expostulate, or if she bear me in her sight; then will she be all my own. All delicacy is my charmer. I long to see how such a delicacy, on either occasion, will behave. And in my situation it behoves me to provide against every accident.

I must take care, knowing what an eel I have to do with, that the little wriggling rogue does not slip thro' my fingers. How silly should I look, staring after her, when she had shot from me into the muddy river, her family, from which, with so much difficulty, I have taken her!

Well then; here are---Let me see---How many persons are there who, after Monday night, will be able to swear, that she has gone by my name, answered to my name, had no other view in leaving her friends, but to go by my name? Her own relations not able nor willing to deny it.---First, here are my servants, her servant Dorcas, Mrs. Sinclair, her two nieces, and Miss Partington.

But for fear these evidences should be suspected, here comes the jet of the business.---No less than four worthy gentlemen, of fortune and family, who were all in company such a night particularly, at a collation to which they were invited by Robert Lovelace of Sandown-Hall, in the county of Lancaster, Esquire, in company with Magdalen Sinclair widow, and Priscilla Partington spinster, and the Lady complainant; when the said Robert Lovelace addressed himself to the said lady, on a multitude of occasions, as *his* lady; as they and others did, as Mrs. Lovelace; every one complimenting and congratulating her

upon her nuptials ; and that she received such their compliments and congratulations with no other visible displeasure or repugnance, than such as a young bride, full of blushes and pretty confusion, might be supposed to express upon such contemplative revolvings as those compliments would naturally inspire. Nor do thou rave at me Jack, nor rebel.---Dost think I brought the dear creature here for nothing?

And there's a faint sketch of my plot.---Stand by, vailets---Tanta-ra-ra-ra!---Veil your bonnets, and confess your Master!

L E T T E R LXV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Sunday.

HAVE been at church, Jack.---Behaved admirably well too!---My charmer is pleased with me now:---For I was exceedingly attentive to the discourse, and very ready in the auditor's part of the service.---Eyes did not much wander. How could they? When the loveliest object, infinitely the loveliest in the whole church, was in my view.

Dear creature! how fervent, how amiable, in her devotions!---I have got her to own, that she pray'd for me!---I hope a prayer from so excellent a mind will not be made in vain.

There is, after all, something beautifully solemn in devotion!---The Sabbath is a charming institution to *keep* the heart right, when it *is* right. One day in seven, how reasonable!---I think I'll go to church once a day often. I fancy it will go a great way towards making me a reformed man. To see multitudes of well-appearing people, all joining in one reverent act: An exercise worthy of a sentient being! Yet it adds a sting or two to my former stings, when I think of my projects with regard to this charming creature.

creature. In my conscience, I believe, if I were to go constantly to church, I could not pursue them.

I had a scheme come into my head while there : But I will renounce it, because it obtruded itself upon me in so good a place. Excellent creature ! How many *ruins* has she prevented by attaching me to herself !---by ingrossing my whole attention !

But let me tell thee what passed between us in my first visit of this morning ; and then I will acquaint thee more largely with my good behaviour at church.

I could not be admitted till after eight. I found her ready prepared to go out. I pretended to be ignorant of her intention, having charged Dorcas not to own, that she had told me of it.

Going abroad, Madam?---with an air of indifference.

Yes, Sir ; I intend to go to church.

I hope, Madam, I shall have the honour to attend you.

No : She design'd to take a chair and go to the next church.

This startled me : A chair to carry her to the next church from Mrs. Sinclair's, her right name not Sinclair, and to bring her back thither, in the face of people who might not think well of the house ! There was no permitting That ?—Yet I was to appear indifferent.—But said, I should take it for a favour, if she would permit me to attend her in a coach, as there was time for it, to St. Paul's.

She made objections to the gaiety of my dress ; and told me, that if she went to St. Paul's, she could go in a coach without *me*.

I objected Singleton and her brother, and offered to dress in the plainest suit I had.

I beg the favour of attending you, dear Madam, said I. I have not been at church a great while : We shall sit in different stalls : And the next time I go, I

hope it will be to give myself a title to the greatest blessings I can receive.

She made some further objections : But at last permitted me the honour of attending her.

I got myself placed in her eye, that the time might not seem tedious to me; for we were there early. And I gain'd her good opinion, as I mentioned above, by my behaviour.

The subject of the discourse was particular enough : It was about a prophet's story or parable of an ewe-lamb taken by a rich man from a poor one, who dearly loved it, and whose only comfort it was : Designed to strike remorse into David, on his adultery with Uriah's wife Bathsheba, and his murder of the husband [These women, Jack, have been the occasion of all manner of mischief from the beginning!] Now, when David, full of indignation, swore [King David would swear, Jack: But how shouldst thou know who King David was? The story is in the Bible], that the rich man should surely die; Nathan, which was the prophet's name, and a good ingenious fellow, cry'd out (which were the words of the text), *Thou art the man!*—By my soul I thought the person look'd directly at me : And at that moment I cast my eye full at my ewe-lamb. But I must tell thee too, that I thought a good deal of my Rosebud.—A better man than King David, in that point, however, thought I!

When we came home, we talk'd upon the subject; and I shew'd my charmer my attention to the discourse, by letting her know where the doctor made the most of his subject, and where it might have been touch'd to greater advantage (For it is really a very affecting story, and has as pretty a contrivance in it, as ever I read.) And this I did in such a grave way, that she seem'd more and more pleas'd with me; and I have no doubt, that I shall get her to favour me to-morrow night with her company at my collation.

Sunday

Sunday evening.

WE all dined together in Mrs. Sinclair's parlour! All *ex-cessive-ly* right! The two nieces have topp'd their parts: Mrs. Sinclair hers. Never so easy yet as now!—'She really thought a little oddly of these 'people at first, she said: Mrs. Sinclair seem'd very 'forbidding! Her nieces were persons, with whom 'she could not wish to be acquainted. But really 'we should not be too hasty in our censures. Some 'people improve upon us. The widow seems *tolerable*.' [She went no farther than *tolerable*.] 'Miss 'Martin and Miss Horton are young people of good 'sense, and have read a good deal. What Miss Martin particularly said of marriage, and of her humble 'servant, was very solid. She believes, with such notions, she cannot make a bad wife.'—By the way, Sally's humble servant is a woollen-draper of great reputation; and she is soon to be marry'd.

I have been letting her into thy character, and into the characters of my other three Esquires, in hopes to excite her curiosity to see you to-morrow night. I have told her some of the *worst*, as well as *best* parts of your characters, in order to exalt myself, and to obviate any sudden surprizes, as well as to teach her what sort of men she may expect to see, if she will oblige me.

By her observations upon each of you, I shall judge what I may or may not do to *obtain* or *keep* her good opinion: What she will *like* what *not*; and so pursue the one, or avoid the other, as I see proper. So, while she is penetrating into your shallow heads, I shall enter her heart, and know what to bid my own hope for.

The house is to be taken in three weeks: All will be over in three weeks, or bad will be my luck!—Who knows but in three days?—Have I not carry'd that great point of making her pass for my wife to the people below? And that other great one of fixing myself

myself here night and day?—What lady ever escaped me, that lodged under one roof with me?—The house too, THE house; the people, people after my own heart: Her servants Will. and Dorcas both my servants.—*Three days did I say! Pho! pho!—Three hours!*



I HAVE carried my third point, Jack; but extremely to the dislike of my charmer. Miss Partington was introduced to her; and being engaged on condition, that my beloved would honour me at my collation, there was no denying her; so fine a young lady! seconded by my earnest intreaties.

I long to have your opinions of my fair prize!—If you love to see features that glow, tho' the heart is frozen, and never yet was thaw'd; if you love fine sense, and adages flowing thro' teeth of ivory, and lips of coral; an eye that penetrates all things; a voice that is harmony itself; an air of grandeur, mingled with a sweetness that cannot be described; a politeness that if ever equalled, was never excelled—You'll see all these excellencies, and ten times more, in this my GLORIANA.

*Mark her majestic fabric!—She's a temple
Sacred by birth, and built by hands divine;
Her soul the deity that lodges there:
Nor is the pile unworthy of the god.*

Or, to describe her in a softer stile, with Rowe,
*The bloom of op'ning flow'rs, unsully'd beauty,
Softness, and sweetest innocence, she wears,
And looks like nature in the world's first spring.*

Adieu, varlets four!—At six on Monday evening,
I expect ye all.

In the Lady's next letter, dated on Monday morning, she praises his behaviour at church, his observations afterwards. Likes the people of the house better than she did. The more likes them by reason of the people of condition that visit them. She

She dates again, and declares herself displeased at Miss Partington's being introduced to her: And still more for being obliged to promise to be present at Mr. Lovelace's collation. She foresees, she says, a murder'd evening.

L E T T E R L X V I.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

Monday night, May 1.

I HAVE just escaped from the very disagreeable company I was obliged, so much against my will, to be in. As a very particular relation of this evening's conversation would be painful to me, you must content yourself with what you shall be able to collect from the outlines, as I may call them, of the characters of the persons, assisted by the little histories Mr. Lovelace gave me of each yesterday.

The names of the gentlemen are Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, and Belford. These four, with Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Partington, the great heiress mentioned in my last, Mr. Lovelace, and myself, made up the company.

I gave you before the favourable side of Miss Partington's character, such as it was given me by Mrs. Sinclair, and her nieces. I will now add a few words from my own observations upon her behaviour in *this* company.

In *better* company, perhaps, she would have appeared to less disadvantage: But, notwithstanding her innocent looks, which Mr. Lovelace also highly praised, he is the last person whose judgment I would take upon real modesty. For I observed, that, upon some talk from the gentlemen, not free enough to be openly censur'd, yet too indecent in its implication to come from well-bred persons, in the company of virtuous people, this young lady was very ready to apprehend;
and

and yet, by smiles and simperings, to encourage, rather than discourage, the culpable freedoms of persons, who, in what they went out of their way to say, must either be guilty of absurdity, meaning *nothing*; or, meaning *something*, of rudeness.

But indeed I have seen ladies, of whom I have had a better opinion, than I can say I have of Mrs. Sinclair, who have allowed *gentlemen*, and *themselves* too, in greater liberties of this sort, than I have thought consistent with that purity of manners which ought to be the distinguishing characteristic of our sex: For what are *words*, but the *body* and *dress* of *thought*? And is not the mind indicated strongly by its outward dress?

But to the gentlemen, as they must be called in right of their ancestors, it seems; for no other do they appear to have.

Mr. BELTON has had university-education, and was designed for the gown; but that not suiting with the gaiety of his temper, and an uncle dying, who bequeathed to him a good estate, he quitted the college, came up to town, and commenced fine gentleman. He is said to be a man of sense. He dresses gaily, but not quite foppishly; drinks hard; keeps all hours, and glories in doing so; games, and has been hurt by that pernicious diversion: He is about thirty years of age: His face is of a fiery red, somewhat bloated and pimply; and his irregularities threaten a brief duration to the sensual dream he is in; for he has a short consumptive cough, which seems to indicate bad lungs; yet makes himself and his friends merry, by his stupid and inconsiderate jests upon very threatening symptoms, which ought to make him more serious.

Mr. MOWBRAY has been a great traveller; speaks as many languages as Mr. Lovelace himself, but not so fluently: Is of a good family: Seems to be about thirty-three or thirty-four: Tall and comely in his person:

person : Bold and daring in his look : Is a large-boned strong man : Has a great scar in his forehead, with a dent, as if his skull had been beaten in there ; and a seamed scar in his right cheek. He dresses likewise very gaily : Has his servants always about him, whom he is continually calling upon, and sending on the most trifling messages ; half a dozen instances of which we had in the little time I was among them ; while they seem to watch the turn of his fierce eye, to be ready to run, before they have half his message, and serve him with fear and trembling. Yet to his equals the man seems tolerable : Talks not amiss upon public entertainments and diversions, especially upon those abroad : Yet has a romancing air ; and avers things strongly, which seem quite improbable. Indeed, he *doubts* nothing, but what he ought to *believe* : For he jests upon sacred things ; and professes to hate the clergy of all religions : Has high notions of *honour*, a word hardly ever out of his mouth ; but seems to have no great regard to *morals*.

Mr. TOURVILLE occasionally told his age ; just turn'd of thirty-one. He also is of an antient family ; but, in his person and manners, more of what I call the coxcomb, than any of his companions : He dresses richly ; would be thought elegant in the choice and fashion of what he wears ; yet, after all, appears rather tawdry than fine. One sees, by the care he takes of his outside, and the notice he bespeaks from *every one*, by his *own* notice of himself, that the inside takes up the least of his attention. He dances finely, Mr. Lovelace says : Is a master of music ; and singing is one of his principal excellencies. They prevailed upon him to sing ; and he obliged them both in Italian and French ; and, to do him justice, his songs in both were decent. They were all highly delighted with his performance ; but his greatest admirers were Mrs. Sinclair, Miss Partington, and *himself*. To me he appeared to have a great deal of affectation.

Mr.

Mr. Tourville's conversation and address are insufferably full of those really gross affronts upon the understandings of our sex, which the moderns call *compliments*, and are intended to pass for so many instances of good breeding, tho' the most hyperbolical, unnatural stuff that can be conceived, and which can only serve to shew the insincerity of the *complimenter*; and the ridiculous light in which the *complimented* appears in his eyes, if he supposes a woman capable of relishing the romantic absurdities of his speeches.

He affects to introduce into his common talk Italian and French words; and often answers an English question in French, which language he greatly prefers to the barbarously hissing English. But then he never fails to translate, into this his odious native tongue, the words, and the sentences, he speaks in the other two—Left, perhaps, it should be questioned, whether he understands what he says.

He loves to tell stories: Always calls them *merry*, *facetious*, *good*, or *excellent*, before he begins, in order to bespeak the attention of the hearers; but never gives himself concern, in the *progress* or *conclusion* of them, to make good what he promises in his *preface*. Indeed he seldom brings any of them to a conclusion; for, if his company have patience to hear him out, he breaks in upon himself by so many parenthetical intrusions, as one may call them, and has so many incidents springing in upon him, that he frequently drops his own thread, and sometimes sits down satisfied half-way; or, if at other times he would resume it, he applies to his company to help him in again, with a *Devil fetch him*, if he remembers what he was driving at. But enough, and too much, of Mr. Tourville.

Mr. BELFORD is the fourth gentleman, and one of whom Mr. Lovelace seems more fond than any of the rest—Being a man of try'd bravery, it seems; for this pair of friends came acquainted upon occasion of a quarrel

quarrel (possibly about a lady), which a rencounter at Kensington gravelpits ended, by the mediation of three gentlemen strangers.

Mr. Belford is about seven or eight and twenty, it seems; the youngest of the five, except Mr. Lovelace: And these are, perhaps, the wickedest; for they seem capable of leading the other three as they please. Mr. Belford, as the others, dresses gaily: But has not those advantages of person, nor from his dress, which Mr. Lovelace is too proud of. He has, however, the appearance of a gentleman. He is well read in classical authors, and in the best English poets and writers: And, by his means, the conversation took now-and-then a more agreeable turn: And I, who endeavoured to put the best face I could upon my situation, as I passed for Mrs. Lovelace with them, made shift to join in it, at such times; and received abundance of compliments from all the company, on the observations I made.

Mr. Belford seems good-natured and obliging; and, altho' very complaisant, not so fulsomely so, as Mr. Tourville; and has a polite and easy manner of expressing his sentiments on all occasions. He seems to delight in a logical way of argumentation, as also does Mr. Belton; these two attacking each other in this way; and both looking at us women, as if to observe whether we did not admire their learning, or their wit, when they had said a smart thing. But Mr. Belford had visibly the advantage of the other, having quicker parts, and, by taking the worst side of the argument, seemed to *think* he had: All together, he put me in mind of that character in Milton:

—*His tongue*

Dropt manna, and could make the worse appear

The better reason, to perplex and dash

Maturest counsels; for his thoughts were low;

To vice industrious: But to nobler deeds

Tim'rous and slothful:—Yet he pleas'd the ear.

VOL. III.

F f

How

How little soever matters in general may be to our liking, we are apt to endeavour, when hope is strong enough to permit it, to make the best we can of the lot we have drawn; and I could not but observe often, how much Mr. Lovelace excelled all his four friends in every thing they seemed desirous to excel in. But, as to wit and vivacity, he had no equal present. All the others gave up to him, when his lips began to open. The haughty Mowbray would call upon the prating Tourville for silence, and with his elbow would punch the supercilious Belton into attention, when Lovelace was going to speak. And when he had spoken, the words, Charming fellow! with a free word of admiration or envy, fell from every mouth. He has indeed so many advantages in his person and manner, that what would be inexcusable in another, if one took not great care to watch over one's self, and to distinguish what is the essence of right and wrong, would look becoming in him.

‘See him among twenty men,’ said Mr. Belford; who, to my no small vexation and confusion, with the forwardness of a favoured and intrusted friend, singled me out, on Mr. Lovelace's being sent for down, to make me congratulatory compliments on my supposed nuptials; which he did with a caution, ‘not to insist too long on the rigorous vow I had imposed upon a man so universally admired——’

‘See him among twenty men,’ said he, ‘all of distinction, and nobody is regarded but Mr. Lovelace.’

It must, indeed, be confessed, that there is in his whole deportment a natural dignity, which renders all insolent or imperative demeanour as unnecessary as inexcusable. Then that deceiving sweetness which appears in his smiles, in his accent, in his whole aspect and address, when he thinks it worth his while to oblige, or endeavour to attract, how does this shew, that he was *born* innocent, as I may say; that he was not *naturally* the cruel, the boisterous, the im-

petuous

petuous creature, which the wicked company he may have fallen into have made him! For he has, besides, an open, and, I think, an honest countenance. Don't you think so too?—On all these specious appearances, have I founded my hopes of seeing him a reformed man.

But 'tis amazing to me, I own, that with so much of the gentleman, such a general knowledge of books and men, such a skill in the learned as well as modern languages, he can take so much delight as he does in the company of such persons as I have described, and in subjects of frothy impertinence, unworthy of his talents, and natural and acquired advantages. I can think of but one reason for it, and that must argue a very low mind; his VANITY; which makes him desirous of being considered as the head of the people he consorts with. A man to love praise; yet to be content to draw it from such contaminated springs!

One compliment passed from Mr. Belford to Mr. Lovelace, which hastened my quitting the shocking company—'You are a happy man, Mr. Lovelace,' said he, upon some fine speeches made him by Mrs. Sinclair, and assented to by Miss Partington: 'You have so much courage, and so much wit, that neither man nor woman can stand before you.'

Mr. Belford looked at me, when he spoke: Yes, my dear, he smilingly looked at me: And he looked upon his complimented friend: And all their *assenting*, and therefore *affronting* eyes, both mens and womens, were turned upon your Clarissa: At least, my self-reproaching heart made me think so; for that would hardly permit my eye to look up.

Oh! my dear, were but a woman, who is thought to be in love with a man (and this must be believed to be my case; or to what can my *supposed* voluntary going off with Mr. Lovelace be imputed to?) to reflect one moment on the exaltation she gives *him*, and

the disgrace she brings upon *herself*, the low pity, the silent contempt, the insolent sneers and whispers, to which she makes herself obnoxious from a censuring world of both sexes, how would she despise herself! And how much more eligible would she think death itself to such a discovered debasement!

What I have thus in general touched upon, will account to you why I could not more particularly relate what passed in the evening's conversation: Which, as may be gathered from what I have written, abounded with *approbatory* accusations, and *supposed* witty retorts.

L E T T E R LXVII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Monday Midnight.

I AM very much vexed and disturbed at an odd incident.

Mrs. Sinclair has just now left me, I believe in displeasure, on my declining to comply with a request she made me: Which was, to admit Miss Partington to a share in my bed; her house being crowded by her nieces guests, and their attendants, as well as by those of Miss Partington.

There might be nothing in it; and my denial carried a stiff and ill-natured appearance. But instantly, all at once, upon her making the request, it came into my thought, that I was, in a manner, a stranger to every-body in the house: Not so much as a servant I could call my own; or of whom I had any great opinion: That there were four gentlemen of free manners in the house, avowed supporters of Mr. Lovelace in matters of offence; himself a man of enterprize; all, as far as I knew (and had reason to think by their noisy mirth after I had left them), drinking deeply: That Miss Partington herself is not so bashful a lady, as she was represented to me to be:

That

That officious pains were taken to give me a good opinion of her: And that Mrs. Sinclair made a greater parade in prefacing the request, than such a request needed. To deny, thought I, can carry only an appearance of singularity, to people who *already* think me singular. To consent, may possibly, if not probably, be attended with inconveniences. The consequences of the alternative so very disproportionate, I thought it more prudent to incur the censure, than risk the inconvenience.

I told her, that I was writing a long letter: 'That I should choose to write till I were sleepy: And that Miss would be a restraint upon me, and I upon her.

She was loth, she said, that so delicate a young creature, and so great a fortune, as Miss Partington was, should be put to lie with Dorcas in a press-bed. She should be very sorry, if she had asked an improper thing: She had never been so put to it before: And Miss would stay up with *her*, till I had done writing.

Alarmed at this urgency, and it being easier to persist in a denial *given*, than give it at *first*, I offered Miss my whole bed, and to retire into the dining-room, and there, locking myself in, write all the night.

The poor thing, she said, was afraid to lie alone. To be sure Miss Partington would not put me to such an inconvenience.

She then withdrew: But returned; begged my pardon for returning: But the poor child, she said, was in tears. Miss Partington had never seen a young lady she so much admired, and so much wished to imitate, as me. The dear girl hoped that nothing had passed in her behaviour, to give me dislike to her. Should she bring her to me?

I was very busy, I said. The letter I was writing was upon a very important subject. I hoped to see Miss in the morning; when I would apologize to her for my particularity. And then Mrs. Sinclair hesitating, and moving towards the door (tho' she turned

round to me again), I desired her (lighting her) to take care how she went down.

Pray, Madam, said she, on the stairs head, don't give yourself all this trouble. God knows my heart, I meant no affront: But, since you seem to take my freedom amiss, I beg you will not acquaint Mr. Lovelace with it; for he, perhaps, will think me bold and impertinent.

Now, my dear, is not this a particular incident; either as I have made it, or as it was designed? I don't love to do an uncivil thing. And if nothing were meant by the request, my refusal deserves to be called so. Then I have shewn a suspicion of foul usage by it, which surely dare not be meant. If just, I ought to apprehend every thing, and fly the house, and the man, as I would an infection. If not just, and if I cannot contrive to clear myself of having entertained suspicions, by assigning some other plausible reason for my denial, the very staying here will have an appearance not at all reputable to myself.

I am now out of humour with him, with myself, with all the world but you. His companions are shocking creatures. Why, again I repeat, should he have been desirous to bring me into such company? Once more, I like him not. I am, my dear,

Your affectionate

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R LXVIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Tuesday, May 2.

WITH infinite regret I am obliged to tell you, that I can no longer write to you, or receive letters from you. Your mother has sent me a letter inclosed in a cover to Mr. Lovelace, directed for him at Lord M.'s (and which was brought him just now), reproaching me on this subject in very angry terms, and

and forbidding me, as I would not be thought to intend to make her and you unhappy, to write to you, without her leave.

This, therefore, is the last you must receive from me, till happier times: And as my prospects are not very bad, I presume we shall soon have leave to write again; and even to see each other: Since an alliance with a family so honourable as Mr. Lovelace's is, will not be a disgrace.

She is pleased to write, that if I would wish to *inflame* you, I should let you know her written prohibition: But otherwise find some way of my own accord (without bringing *her* into the question) to decline a correspondence, which I must know she has for some time past forbidden. But all I can say, is, to beg of you *not* to be inflamed;—to beg of you, not to let her *know*, or even by your behaviour to her, on this occasion, *guess*, that I have acquainted you with my reason for declining to write to you. For how else, after the scruples I have heretofore made on this very subject, yet proceeding to correspond, can I honestly satisfy you about my motives for this sudden stop? So, my dear, I choose, you see, rather to rely upon your discretion, than to fain reasons you would not be satisfy'd with, but, with your usual active penetration, sift to the bottom, and at last find me to be a mean and low qualifier; and that, with an implication injurious to you, that I supposed you had not prudence enough to be trusted with the naked truth.

I repeat, that my prospects are not bad. The house, I presume, will soon be taken. The people here are very respectful, notwithstanding my nicety about Miss Partington. Miss Martin, who is near marriage with an eminent tradesman in the Strand, just now, in a very respectful manner, asked my opinion of some patterns of rick silks for the occasion. The widow has a less forbidding appearance than at first.
Mr.

Mr. Lovelace, on my declared dislike of his four friends, has assured me, that neither they nor anybody else shall be introduced to me, without my leave.

These circumstances I mention, as you will suppose, that your kind heart may be at ease about me; that you may be induced by them to acquiesce with your mother's commands, *cheerfully* acquiesce, and that for *my* sake, lest I should be thought an *inflamer*; who am, with very contrary intentions, my dearest, and best-beloved friend,

Your ever obliged and affectionate,

CL. HARLOWE.

L E T T E R LXIX.

Miss HOWE, To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Wedn. May 3.

I AM astonished that my mother should take such a step—purely to exercise an unreasonable act of authority; and to oblige the most remorseless hearts in the world. If I find, that I can be of use to you either by advice or information, do you think I will not give it?—Were it to any other person, *less* dear to me than you are, do you think, in such a case, I would forbear giving it?—

Mr. Hickman, who pretends to a little casuistry in such nice matters, is of opinion, that I ought not to decline a correspondence thus circumstanced. And 'tis well he is; for my mother having set me up, I must have somebody to quarrel with.

This I will come into, if it will make you easy: I will forbear to write to you for a few days, if nothing extraordinary happen;—and till the rigour of her prohibition is abated. But be assured, that I will not dispense with your writing to me. My heart, my conscience, my honour, will not permit it.

But

But how will I help myself?—How!—Easy enough. For I do assure you, that I want but very little further provocation to fly privately to London: And if I do, I will not leave you till I see you either honourably married, or absolutely quit of the wretch: And in this last case, I will take you down with me, in defiance of the whole world: Or, if you refuse to go with me, stay with you, and accompany you as your shadow whithersoever you go.

Don't be frightened at this declaration. There is but one consideration, and but one hope, that withhold me; watched as I am in all my retirements; obliged to read to her without a voice; to work in her presence without fingers; and to lie with her every night against my will. The *consideration* is, Lest you should apprehend that a step of this nature would look like a doubling of your fault, in the eyes of such as think your going away a fault. The *hope* is, That things will still end happily, and that some people will have reason to take shame to themselves for the sorry parts they have acted—Nevertheless, I am often balancing. But your resolving to give up the correspondence at this crisis, will turn the scale. Write therefore, or take the consequence.

A few words upon the subject of your last letters.—I know not whether your brother's wise project be given up or not. A dead silence reigns in your family. Your brother was absent three days; then at home one; and is now absent: But whether with Singleton or not, I cannot find out.

By your account of your wretch's companions, I see not but they are a set of infernals, and he the Beelzebub. What could he mean, as you say, by his earnestness to bring you into such company, and to give you such an opportunity to make him and them reflecting-glasses to one another? The man's a fool, to be sure, my dear.—A silly fellow, at least.—They must put on their *best* before you, no doubt.—Lords
of

of the creation:—Noble fellows these!—Yet who knows how many poor despicable souls of our sex the worst of them has had to whine after him!

You have brought an inconvenience upon yourself, as you observe, by your refusal of Miss Partington for your bedfellow. Pity you had not admitted her. Watchful, as *you* are, what could have happened? If violence were intended, he would not stay for the night. You might have sat up after her, or not gone to bed. Mrs. Sinclair pressed it too far. You was over-scrupulous.

If any thing happens to delay your nuptials, I would advise you to remove: But if you marry, you may, perhaps, think it no great matter to stay where you are, till you take possession of your own estate. The knot once tied, and with so resolute a man, it is my opinion, your relations will soon resign what they cannot legally hold: And, were even a litigation to follow, you will not be *able*, nor ought you to be *willing* to help it: For your estate will then be his right; and it will be unjust to wish it to be with-held from him.

One thing I would advise you to think of; and that is, of proper settlements: It will be to the credit of your prudence, and of his justice (and the more as matters stand), that something of this should be done, before you marry. Bad as he is, no-body accounts him a sordid man. And I wonder he has been hitherto silent on that subject.

I am not displeased with his proposal about the widow lady's house. I think it will do very well. But if it must be three weeks before you can be certain about it; surely you need not put off his day for that space: And he may bespeak his equipages. Surprising to me, that he could be so acquiescent!

I repeat—Continue to write to me:—I insist upon it; and that as minutely as possible: Or, take the consequence.

Miss Clarissa Harlowe.

335

consequence. I send this by a particular hand. I am, and ever will be,

Your most affectionate

ANNA HOWE.

L E T T E R LXX.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, *To Miss* HOWE.

Thursday, May 4.

I Forego every other engagement, I suspend every wish, I banish every other fear, to take up my pen, to beg of you, that you will not think of being *guilty* of such an act of love as I can never thank you for; but must for ever regret. If I *must* continue to write to you, I must. I know full well your impatience of controul, when you have the least imagination that your generosity or friendship is likely to be wounded by it.

My dearest, dearest creature, would you incur a maternal, as I have a paternal, malediction? Would not the world think there was an infection in my fault, if it were to be followed by *Miss* Howe? There are some points so flagrantly wrong, that they will not bear to be argued upon. This is one of them. I need not give reasons against such a rashness. Heaven forbid, that it should be known, that you had it but once in your *thought*, be your motives ever so noble and generous, to follow so bad an example! The rather, as that you would, in such a case, want the extenuations that might be pleaded in my favour; and particularly that one of being *surprised* into the unhappy step.

The restraint your mamma lays you under, would not have appeared heavy, but on my account. Would you have once thought it a hardship to be admitted to a part of her bed?—How did I use to be delighted with such a favour from my mother!—How did I
love

love to work in her presence!—So did you in the presence of yours once. And to read to her on winter-evenings I know was one of your joys.—Do not give me cause to reproach myself on the reason that may be assigned for the change.

Learn, my dear, I beseech you learn, to subdue your own passions. Be the motives what they will, excess is excess. Those passions in our sex, which we take no pains to subdue, may have one and the same source with those infinitely blacker passions, which we used so often to condemn in the violent and headstrong of the other sex; and which may be heightened in them only by custom, and their freer education. Let us both, my dear, ponder well this thought; look into ourselves, and fear.

If I write, as I find I must, I insist upon *your* forbearance.—Your silence to *this* shall be the sign to me, that you will not think of the rashness you threaten me with; and that you will obey your mamma as to your *own* part of the correspondence, however: Especially, as you can inform or advise me in every weighty case, by Mr. Hickman's pen.

My trembling writing will shew you, what a trembling heart you, my dear impetuous creature, have given to,

Your ever-obliged,

Or, if you take so rash a step,

Your for-ever disobliged,

CL. HARLOWE.

My cloaths were brought to me just now. But you have so much discomposed me, that I have no heart to look into the trunks.

A servant of Mr. Lovelace carries this to Mr. Hickman for dispatch-sake. Let that worthy man's pen relieve my heart from this new uneasiness.

L E T-

L E T T E R LXXI.

Mr. HICKMAN, *To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.**[Sent to Wilson's by a particular band.]*

Madam,

Friday, May 5.

I Have the honour of dear Miss Howe's commands, to acquaint you, without knowing the occasion, that she is excessively concerned for the concern she has given you in her last letter: And that, if you will but write to her under cover, as before, she will have no thoughts of what you are so very apprehensive about.—Yet she bid me write, 'That if she has but the *least* imagination that she can *serve* you, and *save* you,' those are her words, 'all the censures of the world will be but of second consideration with her.' I have great temptations on this occasion, to express my own resentments upon your present state; but not being fully apprised of what that is—Only conjecturing from the disturbance upon the mind of the dearest Lady in the world to me, and the most sincere of friends to you, that *that* is not altogether so happy as were to be wish'd; and being, moreover, forbid to enter into the cruel subject; I can only offer, *as I do*, my best and faithfullest services; and to wish you a happy deliverance from all your troubles. For, I am,

Most excellent young Lady,
Your faithful and most obedient servant,
 CH. HICKMAN.

L E T T E R LXXII.

Mr. LOVELACE, *To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;*

Tuesday, May 2.

MERCURY, as the Fabulist tells us, having the curiosity to know the estimation he stood in

VOL. III.

G g

among

among mortals, descended in disguise, and, in a statuaries shop, cheapens a Jupiter, then a Juno, then one, then another, of the *Dii majores*; and, at last, asks, What price that same statue of *Mercury* bore? O, says the artist, buy one of the others, Sir; and I'll throw ye in that for nothing. How sheepish must the god of thieves look, upon this rebuff to his vanity!

So thou!—A thousand pounds wouldst thou give for the good opinion of this single lady: To be only thought tolerably of, and not quite unworthy of her conversation, would make thee happy: And, at parting last night, or rather this morning, thou madest me promise a few lines to Edgware, to let thee know, what she thinks of thee, and thy brother varlets.

Thy thousand pounds, Jack, is all thy own: For most heartily does she dislike ye all: Thee as much as any.

I am sorry for it too, as to thy part; for two reasons: *One*, that I think thy motive for thy curiosity was fear, and consciousness: Whereas that of the arch-thief was vanity, intolerable vanity: And he was therefore justly sent away with a blush upon his cheeks to heaven, and could not brag: 'The *other*'; that I am afraid, if she dislikes *thee*, she dislikes *me*: For are we not birds of a feather?

I must never talk of reformation, she told me, having such companions, and taking such delight as I seemed to take, in their frothy conversation.

I, no more than you, imagined she could possibly like ye: But then, as *my* friends, I thought a person of her education would have been more sparing of her censures.

I don't know how it is, Belford; but women think themselves intitled to take any freedoms with *us*; while we are unpolite, forsooth, and I can't tell what, if we don't tell a pack of cursed lyes, and make black
white,

white, in *their* favour—teaching us to be hypocrites, yet stigmatizing us, at other times, for deceivers.

I defended ye all, as well as I could: But you know, there was no attempting ought but a palliative defence, to one of her principles. I will summarily give thee a few of my pleas.

To the *pure*, every little deviation seemed offensive: Yet I saw not, that there was any thing amiss the whole evening, either in your words or behaviour. Some people could talk but upon *one* or *two* subjects: She upon every one: No wonder, therefore, *they* talked to what they understood best; and to mere objects of sense.—Had she honour'd us with more of *her* conversation, she would have been less disgusted with *ours*; for she saw how every-one was prepared to admire her, whenever she opened her lips. You in particular, had said, when she retired, that virtue itself spoke, when she spoke: But that you had such an awe upon you, after she had favoured us with an observation or two on a subject started, that you should ever be afraid, in her company, to be found *most* exceptionable, when you intended to be *least* so.

Plainly, she said, she neither liked my companions, nor the house she was in.

I liked not the house any more than she: 'Tho' the people were very obliging, and she had owned they were less exceptionable to herself, than at first: And were we not about another of our own?

She did not like Miss Partington: Let her fortune be what it would, she should not choose an intimacy with her. She thought it was a hardship to be put upon such a difficulty, as she was put upon the preceding night, when there were lodgers in the front house, whom they had reason to be freer with, than upon so short an acquaintance with her.

I pretended to be an utter stranger as to this particular; and, when she explained herself upon it, condemned the request, and call'd it a confident one.

She, *artfully*, made lighter of her denial of Miss for a bedfellow, than she *thought* of it, I could see that; for it was plain, she supposed there was room for me to think she had been either *over-nice*, or *over-cautious*.

I offered to resent Mrs. Sinclair's freedom.

No; there was no great matter in it: It was best to let it pass: It might be thought more particular in her to *deny*, than in Mrs. Sinclair to *ask*, or Miss to *expect*: But as the people below had a large acquaintance, she did not know how much she might have her retirements invaded, if she gave way. And indeed there were levities in Miss's behaviour, which she could not so far pass over, as to wish an intimacy with her. But if she were such a vast fortune, she could not but say, that Miss seemed a much more suitable person for me to make my addresses to, than——

Interrupting her, with gravity, I said I liked Miss Partington as little as *she could* like her. She was a silly young creature; who seemed too likely to justify her guardians watchfulness over her. But nevertheless, as to her general conversation and behaviour last night, I must own, that I thought the girl (for *girl* she was, as to discretion) not exceptionable; only carrying herself as a free good-natured creature, who thought herself secure in the honour of her company.

It was very well said of me, she replied: But, if Miss were so *well* satisfied with her company, she left it to me, whether I was not very kind to suppose her such an *innocent*—For her own part, she had seen nothing of the London world: But thought, she must tell me plainly, that she never was in such company in her life; nor ever again wish'd to *be* in it.

There, Belford!—Worse off than Mercury!—Art thou not?

I was nettled. Hard would be the lot of *more* discreet ladies, as far as I knew, than Miss Partington, were they to be judged by so rigid a virtue as hers.

Not

Not so, she said : But if I really saw nothing exceptionable to a virtuous mind, in that young lady's behaviour, *my* ignorance of *better* behaviour was, she must needs tell me, as pitiable as *hers* : And it were to be wished, that minds *so* paired, for their *own* sakes, should never be separated.

See, Jack, what I get by my charity !

I thank'd her heartily. But I must take the liberty to say, that good folks were generally so uncharitable, that devil take me, if I would choose to be good, were the consequence to be, that I must think hardly of the whole world besides.

She congratulated me upon my charity : But told me, that, to enlarge her *own*, she hoped it would not be expected of her to approve of the low company I had brought her into last night.

No exception for thee, Belford ! Safe is thy thousand pounds.

I saw not, I said, begging her pardon, that she liked *any-body* [Plain-dealing for plain-dealing !—Why then did she abuse my friends ?—*Love me, and love my dogs*, as Lord M. would say].—However, let me but know, whom, and what, she did, or did not like ; and, if possible, I would like, and dislike, the very same persons and things.

She bid me then, in a pet, *dislike myself*.

Curfed severe !—Does she think she must not pay for it one day, or one night ?—And if *one, many* ; that's my comfort !

I was in a train of being so happy, I said, before my earnestness to procure her to favour my friends with her company, that I wished the devil had had as well my friends, as Miss Partington—And yet I must say, that I saw not how good people could answer half their end, which was, by their example, to amend the world, were they to accompany *only* with the good.

I had like to have been blasted by two or three

flashes of lightning from her indignant eyes; and she turned scornfully from me, and retired to her own apartment.—Once more, Jack, safe, as thou seest, is thy thousand pounds.—She says, I am not a polite man—But is she, in the instance before us, more polite for a lady?

And now, dost thou not think, that I owe my charmer some revenge for her cruelty, in obliging such a fine young creature, and so vast a fortune, as Miss Partington, to crowd into a press-bed with her maid-servant Dorcas!—Miss Partington too (with tears) declaring by Mrs. Sinclair, that, would Mrs. Lovelace honour her at Barnet, the best bed and best room in her guardian's house should be at her service.—Thinkest thou, that I could not guess at her dishonourable fears of me!—That she apprehended, that the supposed *husband* would endeavour to take possession of *his own*?—And that Miss Partington would be willing to contribute to such a piece of justice?

Thus, then, thou both remindest, and defiest me, charmer!—And since thou relievest more on thy own precaution than upon my honour; be it unto thee as thou apprehendest, fair one!

And now, Jack, let me know, what thy opinion, and the opinions of thy brother varlets, are of my Gloriana.

I have just now heard, that her Hannah hopes to be soon well enough to attend her young lady, when in London. It seems the girl has had no physician. I must send her one, out of pure love and respect to her mistress. Who knows but medicine may weaken nature, and strengthen the disease?—As her malady is not a fever, very likely it may do so.—But perhaps her hopes are too forward. Blustering weather in this month yet—And that is bad for rheumatick complaints.

L E T-

L E T T E R LXXIII.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Tuesday, May 2.

JUST as I had sealed up the inclosed, comes a letter to my beloved, in a cover to me, directed to Lord M.'s. From whom, thinkest thou?—From Mrs. Howe! —

And what the contents!

How should I know, unless the dear creature had communicated them to me? But a very cruel letter I believe it is, by the effect it had upon her. The tears ran down her cheeks as she read it; and her colour changed several times. No end of her persecutions, I think.

'What a cruelty in her fate!' said the sweet lamenter.—'Now the only comfort of her life must be given up!'

Miss Howe's correspondence, no doubt.

But *should* she be so much grieved at this? This correspondence was prohibited before, and that, to the daughter, in the strongest terms: But yet carried on by *both*: Altho' a brace of impeccables, and please ye. Could they expect, that a mother would not vindicate her authority?—And finding her prohibition ineffectual with her perverse *daughter*, was it not reasonable to suppose she would try what effect it would have upon her *daughter's friend*?—And now I believe the end will be effectually answered: For my beloved, I dare say, will make a point of conscience of it.

I hate cruelty, especially in *women*; and should have been more concerned for this instance of it in Mrs. Howe, had I not had a stronger instance of the same in my beloved to Miss Partington; for how did she know, since she was so much afraid for herself,
whom

whom Dorcas might let in to that innocent and less watchful young lady? But nevertheless I must needs own, that I am not very sorry for this prohibition, let it originally come from the Harlowes, or from whom it will; because I make no doubt, that it is owing to Miss Howe, in a great measure, that my beloved is so much upon her guard, and thinks so hardly of me. And who can tell, as characters here are so tender, and some disguises so flimsy, what consequences might follow this undutiful correspondence?—I say, therefore, I am not sorry for it: Now will she have nobody to compare notes with: No-body to alarm her: And I may be saved the guilt and disobligation of inspecting into a correspondence that has long made me uneasy.

How every thing works for me!—Why will this charming creature make such contrivances necessary, as will increase my trouble, and my guilt too, as some would account it? But why, rather I would ask, will she fight against her stars?—

L E T T E R LXXIV.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Edgware, Tuesday-night, May 2.

WITHOUT staying for the promised letter from you to inform us what the lady says of us, I write to tell you, That we are all of *one* opinion with regard to *her*; which is, that there is not of her age a finer lady in the world, as to her understanding. As for her person, she is at the age of bloom, and an admirable creature; a perfect beauty: But this *poorer* praise a man can hardly descend to give, who has been honoured with her conversation; and yet she was brought amongst us against her will.

Permit me, dear Lovelace, to be a means of saving this excellent creature from the dangers she hourly runs from the most plotting heart in the world. In
a former,

a former, I pleaded your own family, Lord M.'s wishes particularly; and then I had not seen her: But now, I join her sake, honour's sake, motives of justice, generosity, gratitude, and humanity, which are all concern'd in the preservation of so fine a creature.—Thou knowest not the anguish I should have had (whence arising, I cannot devise), had I not known before I set out this morning, that the incomparable creature had disappointed thee in thy cursed view of getting her to admit the specious Partridge for a bed-fellow.

There is something so awful, and yet so sweet, in this lady's aspect [I have done nothing but talk of her ever since I saw her], that were I to have the Virtues and the Graces all drawn in one piece, they should be taken, every one of them, from different airs and attitudes in her. She was born to adorn the age she was given to, and would be an ornament to the first dignity. What a piercing, yet gentle eye, every glance, I thought, mingled with love and fear of you: What a sweet smile darting through the cloud that overspread her fair face; demonstrating, that she had more apprehensions and grief at her heart, than she cared to express!

You may think what I am going to write too flighty; but, by my faith, I have conceived such a profound reverence for her sense and judgment, that, far from thinking the man excusable who should treat her basely, I am ready to regret that such an angel of a lady, should even marry. She is, in my eye, all mind: And were she to meet with a man all mind likewise, why should the charming qualities she is mistress of, be endangered? Why should such an angel be plunged so low as into the vulgar offices of domestic life? Were she mine, I should hardly wish to see her a mother, unless there were a kind of moral certainty, that minds like hers could be propagated. For why, in short, should not the work of bodies be
left

left to *mere* bodies? I know, that you yourself have an opinion of this lady little less exalted than mine. Belton, Mowbray, Tourville, are all of my mind; are full of her praises; and swear, it would be a million of pities to ruin a lady, in whose fall none but devils can rejoice.

What must that merit and excellence be, that can extort this from *us*, free livers, like yourself, and all of us your partial friends, who have joined with you in your just resentments against the rest of *her* family, and offered our assistance to execute your vengeance on them? But we cannot think it reasonable, that you should punish an innocent lady, who loves you so well; and who is in your protection, and has suffered so much for you, for the faults of her relations.

And here, let me put a serious question, or two. Thinkest thou, truly admirable as this lady is, that the end thou proposest to thyself, if obtained, is answerable to the means, to the trouble thou givest thyself, and the perfidies, tricks, stratagems, and contrivances thou hast already been guilty of, and still meditatest? In every real excellence she surpasses all her sex. But in the article thou seekest to subdue her for, a mere sensualist of her sex, a Partington, a Horton, a Martin, would make a sensualist a thousand times happier than she either will or can.

Sweet are the joys that come with willingness.

And wouldst thou make her unhappy for her whole life, and thyself not happy for a single moment?

Hitherto, it is not too late; and that, perhaps, is as much as can be said, if thou meanest to preserve her esteem and good opinion, as well as person; for I think it is impossible she can get out of thy hands, now she is in this cursed house: O that damn'd hypocritical *Sinclair*, as thou callest her! How was it possible she should behave so speciously as she did, all the time the lady staid with us! Be honest, and marry; and be thank-

thankful, that she will condescend to have thee. If thou dost not, thou'lt be the worst of men; and will be condemned in this world and the next: As I am sure thou oughtest, and shouldest too, wert thou to be judged by one, who never before was so much touched in a woman's favour: And whom thou knowest to be

Thy partial friend,

J. BELFORD.

Our companions consented, that I should withdraw to write to the above effect. They can make nothing of the characters we write in; so I read this to them and they approve of it; and of their own motion each man would set his name to it. I would not delay sending it, for fear of some detestable scheme taking place.

THOMAS BELTON.

RICHARD MOWBRAY.

JAMES TOURVILLE.

Just now are brought me both thine. I vary not my opinion, nor forbear my earnest prayers to thee in her behalf, notwithstanding her dislike of me.

L E T T E R LXXV.

Mr. LOVELACE, To JOHN BELFORD, Esq;

Wednesday, May 3.

WHEN I have already taken pains to acquaint thee in full with my views, designs, and resolutions, with regard to this admirable creature, it is very extraordinary, that thou shouldst vapour as thou dost, in her behalf, when I have made no trial, no attempt: And yet, givest it as thy opinion in a former letter, that advantage may be taken of the situation she is in; and that she may be overcome.

Most of thy reflections, particularly that, which respects the difference as to the joys to be given by the

the Virtuous and the Libertine of the sex, are fitter to come in as after-reflections, than as *antecedencies*.

I own with thee, and with the poet, *That sweet are the joys that come with willingness*.—But is it to be expected, that a woman of education, and a lover of forms, will yield before she is attacked?—And have I so much as summon'd This to surrender?—I doubt not but I shall meet with difficulty. I must therefore make my first effort by surprize.—There may possibly be some cruelty necessary. But there may be consent in struggle; there may be yielding in resistance: But the first conflict over, whether the following may not be weaker and weaker, till *willingness* follow, is the point to be try'd.—I will illustrate what I have said by the simile of a bird new-caught. We begin with birds, as boys, and, as men, go on to ladies; and both perhaps, in turn, experience our sportive cruelty.

Hast thou not observed the charming gradations, by which the insnared volatile has been brought to bear with its new condition? How at first, refusing all sustenance, it beats and bruises itself against its wires, till it makes its gay plumage fly about, and overspread its well-secured cage. Now it gets out its head; sticking only at its beautiful shoulders: Then, with difficulty, drawing back its head, it gasps for breath, and erectedly perched, with meditating eyes, first surveys, and then attempts, its wired canopy. As it gets breath, with renew'd rage, it beats and bruises again its pretty head and sides, bites the wires, and pecks at the fingers of its delighted tamer. Till at last, finding its efforts ineffectual, quite tired and breathless, it lays itself down, and pants at the bottom of the cage, seeming to bemoan its cruel fate and forfeited liberty. And after a few days, its struggles to escape still diminishing, as it finds it to no purpose to attempt it, its new habitation becomes familiar; and it hops about from perch to perch, resumes its
wonted

wonted chearfulness, and every day sings a song to amuse itself, and reward its keeper.

Now, let me tell thee, that I have known a bird actually starve itself, and die with grief, at its being caught and caged—But never did I meet with a lady who was so silly.—Yet have I heard the dear souls most vehemently threaten their own lives on such an occasion. But it is saying nothing in a woman's favour, if we do not allow her to have more sense than a bird. And yet we must all own, that it is more difficult to catch a bird than a lady.

And now, Belford, were I to go no further, how shall I know whether this sweet bird may not be brought to sing me a fine song, and, in time, to be as well contented with her condition as I have brought other birds to be; some of them very shy ones?

But I guess at thy principal motive in this thy earnestness in behalf of this charming creature. I know that thou correspondest with Lord M. who is impatient, and long has been desirous, to see me shackled. And thou wantest to build up a merit with that noble podagra-man, with a view to one of his nieces. But knowest thou not, that my consent will be wanting to complete it?—And what a commendation will it be of thee to such a girl as Charlotte, when I shall acquaint her with the affront thou puttest upon the whole sex, by asking, whether I think my reward, when I have subdued the most charming woman in the world, will be equal to my trouble?—Which, thinkest thou, a woman of spirit will soonest forgive, the undervaluing varlet who can put such a question; or him, who prefers the pursuit and conquest of a fine woman to all the joys of life?—Have I not known even a virtuous woman, as she would be thought, vow everlasting antipathy to a man, who gave out that she was too old for him to attempt?

But another word or two, as to thy objection relating to my trouble and my reward.

Does not the keen foxhunter endanger his neck and his bones in pursuit of a vermin, which, when killed, is neither fit food for men nor dogs?

Do not the hunters of the nobler game value the venison less than the sport?

Why then should I be reflected upon, and the Sex affronted, for my patience and perseverance in the most noble of all chases; and for not being a poacher in love, as thy question may be made to imply?

Learn of thy master, for the future, to treat more respectfully a sex that yields us our principal diversions and delights.

Proceed anon.

LETTER LXXVI.

Mr. LOVELACE; In Continuation.

WELL say'st thou, that mine is the *most plotting heart in the world*. Thou dost me honour: and I thank thee heartily. Thou art no bad judge. How like Boileau's parson, I strut behind my double chin! Am I not obliged to deserve thy complement?—And wouldst thou have me repent of a murder before I have committed it?

The virtues and Graces are this Lady's handmaids. 'She was certainly born to adorn the age she was given to.'—Well said, Jack—'And would be an ornament to the first dignity.'—But what praise is that, unless the first dignity were adorned with the first merit?—Dignity! gewgaw!—First dignity! Thou idiot!—Art thou, who knowest *me*, so taken with ermine and tinsel?—I, who have won the gold, am only fit to wear it. For the future therefore correct thy style, and proclaim her the ornament of the happiest man, and (respecting herself and Sex) the greatest conqueror in the world.

Then, that she loves me, as thou imaginest, by no means appears clear to me.—Her conditional offers

fers to renounce me; the little confidence she places in me; intitle me to ask, What merit can she have with a man, who won her in spite of herself; and who fairly, in set and obstinate battle, took her prisoner?

As to what thou inferrest from her eye when with us, thou knowest nothing of her heart from that, if thou imaginest, there was one glance of love shot from it. Well did I note her eye, and plainly did I see, that it was all but just civil disgust to me and to the company I had brought her into. Her early retiring that night against all intreaty, might have convinced thee, that there was very little of the gentle in her heart for me. And her eye never knew what it was to contradict her heart.

She is thou sayest, *All mind*. So say I. But why shouldst thou imagine, that such a mind as hers, meeting with such a one as mine; and, to dwell upon the word, meeting with an inclination in hers to *meet*, should not propagate minds like her own?

No doubt of it, as thou sayest, The devils would rejoice in the fall of such a lady. But this is my confidence, that I shall have it in my power to marry when I will. And if I do her this justice, shall I not have a claim to her gratitude? And will she not think herself the Obligated, rather than the Obliger? Then, let me tell thee, Belford, it is impossible so far to hurt the morals of this lady, as thou and thy brother-varlets have hurt others of the Sex, who now are casting about the town firebrands and double death.—Take ye that thistle to mumble upon.

You will, perhaps, tell me, that among all the objects of your respective attempts, there was not one of the rank and merit of my charming Miss Harlowe.

But let me ask, has it not been a constant maxim with us, that the greater the *merit* on the woman's side, the nobler the victory on the man's?—And as to *rank*, sense of honour, sense of shame, pride of fa-

mily, may make rifled rank get up, and shake itself to rights: And if any thing come of it, such a one may suffer only in her pride, by being obliged to take up with a second-rate match instead of a first; and, as it may fall out, be the happier, as well as the more useful, for the misadventure; since (taken off of her publick gaddings, and *domesticated* by her disgrace) she will have reason to think herself obliged to the man who has saved her from further reproach; while *her* fortune and alliance will lay an obligation upon *him*; and her past fall, if she have prudence and consciousness, will be his present and future security.

But a *poor* girl; such a one as my *Rosebud* for instance; having no recalls from education—Being driven out of every family that pretends to reputation, persecuted most perhaps by such as have only kept their secret better; and having no refuge to fly to—The common, the stews, the street, is the fate of such a poor wretch; penury, want, and disease, her sure attendants; and an untimely end perhaps closes the miserable scene.

And will ye not now all join to say, that it is more manly to attack a lion than a sheep?—Thou knowest, that I always illustrated my eagleship, by aiming at the noblest quarries; and by disdaining to make a stoop at wrens, *phil-tits*, and wagtails.

The worst, respecting myself, in the case before me, is, that my triumph, when completed, will be so glorious a one, that I shall never be able to keep up to it. All my future attempts must be poor to this. I shall be as unhappy after a while, from my reflections upon this conquest, as Don John of Austria was, in his, on the renowned victory of Lepanto, when he found, that none of his future achievements could keep with his early glory.

I am sensible, that my pleas and my reasonings may be easily answer'd, and perhaps justly censured; but by whom censured? Not by any of the Confraternity, whose

whose constant course of life, even long before I became your general, to this hour, has justified what ye now, in a fit of squeamishness, and thro' envy condemn. Having therefore vindicated myself and my intentions to YOU, that is all I am at present concerned for.

Be convinced then, that I (according to *our* principles) am right, *thou* wrong; or, at least, be silent. But I command thee to be convinced. And in thy next, be sure to tell me that thou art.

L E T T E R LXXVII.

Mr. BELFORD, To ROBERT LOVELACE, Esq;

Edgware, Thursday, May 4.

I Know that thou art so abandoned a man, that to give thee the best reasons in the world against what thou hast once resolved upon, will be but acting the madman, whom once we saw trying to buffet down a hurricane with his hat. I hope, however, that the Lady's merit will still avail her with thee. But if thou persistest: if thou wilt avenge thyself on this sweet lamb, which thou hast singled out from a flock thou hatest, for the faults of the dogs who kept it: If thou art not to be moved by beauty, by learning, by prudence, by innocence, all shining out in one charming object; but she must fall; fall by the man whom she has chosen for her protector; I would not for a thousand worlds have thy crime to answer for.

Upon my faith, Lovelace, the subject sticks with me, notwithstanding I find I have not the honour of the Lady's good opinion. And the more, when I reflect upon her father's brutal curse, and the villainous hard-heartedness of all her family.—But, nevertheless, I should be desirous to know (if thou wilt proceed) by what gradations, arts, and contrivances, thou effectest thy ingrateful purpose.—And, O Lovelace, I conjure thee, if thou art a *man*, let not the specious devils

thou hast brought her among, be suffered to triumph over her ; nor make her the victim of unmanly artifices. If she yield to *fair seduction*, if I may so express myself ; if thou can'st raise a weakness in her by love, or by arts not inhuman ; I shall the less pity her. And shall then conclude, that there is not a woman in the world who can resist a bold and resolute lover.

A messenger is just now arrived from my uncle. The mortification, it seems, is got up to his knee ; and the surgeons declare, that he cannot live many days. He therefore sends for me directly, with these shocking words, That I will come and close his eyes. My servant, or his, must of necessity, be in town every-day on his case, or on other affairs, and one of them shall regularly attend you for any letter or commands : And it will be charity to write to me as often as you can. For altho' I am likely to be a considerable gainer by the poor man's death, yet I can't say, that I at all love these scenes of Death and the Doctor so near me. The *Doctor* and *Death* I should have said ; for that's the natural order ; and, generally speaking, the one is but the harbinger to the other.

If therefore you decline to oblige me, I shall think you are displeased with my freedom. But let me tell you at the same time, that no man has a right to be displeased at freedoms taken with him for faults he is not ashamed to be guilty of.

J. BELFORD.

L E T T E R LXXVIII.

Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE, To Miss HOWE.

I Thank you and Mr. Hickman for his letter sent me with such kind expedition ; and proceed to obey my dear menacing tyranness.

She then gives the particulars of what passed between herself and Mr. Lovelace, on Tuesday morning, in relation

relation to his four friends, and to Miss Partington, pretty much to the same effect as in Mr. Lovelace's letter Numb. lxxii. And then proceeds.

He is constantly accusing me of over-scrupulousness. He says, I am always out of humour with him. That I could not have behaved more reservedly to Mr. Solmes: And that it is contrary to all his hopes and notions that he should not, in so long a time, find himself able to inspire the person whom he hoped so soon to have the honour to call his, with the least distinguishing tenderness for him beforehand.

Silly and partial incroacher! not to know what to attribute the reserve I am forced to treat him with. But his pride has eaten up his prudence. It is indeed a dirty low pride, that has swallowed up the *true* pride, which should have set him above the vanity that has over-run him. Have you not beheld the man, when I was your happy guest, as he walked to his chariot, looking about him, as if to observe what eyes his specious person and air had attracted? But indeed we have seen homely coxcombs as proud as if they had persons to be proud of; at the same time, that it was apparent, that the pains they took about themselves but the more exposed their defects.—The man who is fond of being thought *more* or *better* than he *is*, as I have often thought, but provokes a scrutiny into his pretensions: and that generally produces contempt. For pride, as I believe I have heretofore observed, is an infallible sign of weakness; of something wrong in the head or heart. He that exalts himself, insults his neighbour; who is provoked to question in him even that merit, which, were he modest, would perhaps be allowed to be his due.

You will say that I am very grave: And so I am. Mr. Lovelace is extremely sunk in my opinion since Monday night: Nor see I before me any thing that
can

can afford me a pleasing hope. For what, with a mind so unequal as his, can be my best hope?

I think I mentioned to you, in my former, that my cloaths were brought me. You flutter'd me so, that I am not sure I did. But I know I design'd it. They were brought me on Thursday; but neither my few guineas with them, nor any of my books, except a *Drexelius on Eternity*, the good old *Practice of Piety*, and a *Francis Spira*. My brother's wit, I suppose. He thinks he does well to point out death and despair to me. I wish for the one, and every now-and-then, am on the brink of the other.

You will the less wonder at my being so very solemn, when, added to the above, and to my uncertain situation, I tell you, that they have sent me with these books a letter from my cousin Morden. It has set my heart against Mr. Lovelace. Against myself too. I send it inclosed. If you please, my dear, you may read it here.

LETTER LXXIX.

To Miss CLARISSA HARLOWE.

Florence, April 13.

I Am extremely concerned to hear of a difference betwixt the rest of a family, so near and dear to me, and *You* still dearer to me than any of the rest.

My cousin James has acquainted me with the offers you have had, and your refusals. I wonder not at either. Such charming promises at so early an age, as when I left England; and those promises, as I have often heard, so greatly exceeded, as well in your person as mind, how much must you be admir'd! How few must there be worthy of you!

Your parents, the most indulgent in the world, to a child the most deserving, have given way, it seems, to your refusals of several gentlemen:—They have
con-

contented themselves at last to name One with *earnestness* to you, because of the address of Another they cannot approve of.

They had not reason, it seems, from your behaviour, to think you greatly averse; so they proceeded:—Perhaps too hastily for a delicacy like yours. But when all was fixed on their parts, and most extraordinary terms concluded in your favour; terms, which abundantly shew the gentleman's just value for you; you fly off with a warmth and vehemence little suited to that sweetness which gave grace to all your actions.

I know very little of either of the gentlemen: But of Mr. Lovelace I know more than of Mr. Solmes. I wish I could say, more to his advantage than I can. As to every qualification but *one*, your brother owns there is no comparison:—But that *one* outweighs all the rest together.—It cannot be thought, that Miss Clarissa Harlowe will dispense with MORALS in a husband.

What, my dearest cousin, shall I first plead to you on this occasion? Your duty, your interest, your temporal, and your eternal welfare, do, and may all depend upon this single point, *The morality of a husband*. A wife cannot always have it in her power to *be* good, or to *do* good, if she has a wicked husband, as a good husband may, if he has a bad wife.—You preserve all your religious regards, I understand;—I wonder not that you do: I should have wonder'd, had you not: But what can you promise yourself, as to perseverance in them, with an immoral husband?

If your parents and you differ in sentiment on this important occasion, let me ask you, my dear cousin, who ought to give way?—I own to you, that I should have thought there could not any-where have been a more suitable match for you, than with Mr. Lovelace, had he been a moral man. I should have very little to say against a man, of whose actions I
am

am not to set up myself as a judge, did he not address my cousin. But, on this occasion, let me tell you, my dear Clarissa, that Mr. Lovelace cannot possibly deserve you. He *may* reform, you'll say; but he may *not*. Habit is not soon shook off. Libertines, who are libertines in defiance of talents, of superior lights, of conviction, hardly ever reform but by miracle, or by incapacity. Well do I know my own sex. Well am I able to judge of the probability of the reformation of a licentious young man, who has not been fasten'd upon by sickness, by affliction, by calamity: Who has a prosperous run of fortune before him: His spirits high: His will uncontrollable: The company he keeps, perhaps such as himself, confirming him in all his courses, assisting him in all his enterprizes.

As to the other gentleman, suppose, my dear cousin, you don't like him at *present*, it is far from being unlikely, that you will *hereafter*: Perhaps the more, for not liking him *now*. He can hardly sink *lower* in your opinion: He may *rise*. Very seldom is it, that *high* expectations are so much as *tolerably* answered. How indeed *can* they, when a fine and extensive imagination carries its expectation infinitely beyond reality, in the highest of our sublunary enjoyments? A lady adorn'd with such an imagination sees no defect in a favour'd object, because she is not conscious of any in herself, till it is too late to rectify the mistakes occasioned by her generous credulity.

But suppose a person of your talents were to marry a man of inferior talents; who, in this case, can be so happy in *herself*, as Miss Clarissa Harlowe? What delight do you take in doing good? How happily do you devote the several portions of the natural day to your own improvement, and to the advantage of all that move within your sphere?—And then such is your taste, such are your acquirements in the politer studies, and in the politer amusements; such
your

your excellence in all the different parts of oeconomy, fit for a young lady's inspection and practice, that your friends would wish you to be taken off, as little as possible, by regards that might be called merely *personal*?

But as to what may be the consequence respecting yourself, respecting a young lady of your exalted talents, from the preference you are suspected to give to a libertine, I would have you, my dear cousin, consider what That may be.—A mind so pure, to mingle with a mind more impure than most of his species! Such a man as This will ingross all your solitudes. He will perpetually fill you with anxieties for him and for yourself. The divine and civil powers defied, and their sanctions broke thro' by him, on every not merely *accidental*, but *meditated* occasion. To be agreeable to him, and to hope to preserve an interest in his affections, you must probably be obliged to abandon all your own laudable pursuits. You must enter into his pleasures and distastes: you must give up your own virtuous companions for his profligate ones: Perhaps be forsaken by yours, because of the scandal he daily gives. Can you hope, cousin, with such a man as This, to be *long* so good as you *now* are;—If not, consider, which of your present laudable delights you would choose to give up?—Which of his culpable ones to follow him in? How could you brook to go backward, instead of forward, in those duties which you now so exemplary perform? And how do you know, if you once give way, where you shall be suffer'd, where you shall be *able*, to stop?

Your brother acknowledges, that Mr. Solmes is not near so agreeable in person, as Mr. Lovelace. But what is *person*, with such a lady as I have the honour to be now writing to?—He owns likewise, that he has not the address of Mr. Lovelace: But what a *mere* personal advantage is *address*, without *morals*?—A lady had better take a husband whose manners she were to fashion, than to find them ready-fashion'd

to her hand, at the price of his morality; a price that is often paid for travelling accomplishments. O my dear cousin, were you but with us here at Florence, or at Rome, or at Paris (where also I resided for many months), to see the gentlemen, whose supposed *rough* English manners at setting out are to be polish'd, and what their improvements are in their return thro' the same places, you would infinitely prefer the man in his *first* stage, to the same man in his *last*. You *find* the difference on their return: Foreign fashions, foreign vices, and foreign diseases too, often complete the man, and to despise his own country and countrymen, himself still more despicable, than the *most* despicable of those he despises: These too generally make up, with a mixture of an unblushing effrontery, the travelled gentleman!

Mr. Lovelace, I know, deserves to have an exception made in his favour; for he is really a man of parts and learning: He was esteemed so both here and at Rome; and a fine person, and a generous turn of mind, gave him great advantages. But you need not to be told, that a libertine man of sense does infinitely more mischief, than a libertine of weak parts is able to do. And this I will tell you farther, that it was Mr. Lovelace's own fault that he was not still more respected than he was, among the *Literati* here. There were, in short, some liberties, in which he indulged himself, that endangered his person and his liberty; and made the best and most worthy of those who honour'd him with their notice, give him up; and his stay both at Florence and at Rome shorter than he designed.

This is all I choose to say of Mr. Lovelace. I had much rather have had reason to give him a quite contrary character. But as to rakes or libertines in general, I, who know them well, must be allowed, because of the mischiefs they have always in their hearts, and

too

too often in their power, to do your Sex, to add still a few more words upon this topic.

A Libertine, my dear cousin, a plotting, an intriguing Libertine, must be generally remorseless;—*Unjust* he must always be. The noble rule, of doing to others what he would have done to himself, is the first rule he breaks; and every day he breaks it; the oftener, the greater his triumph. He has great contempt for your sex: He believes no woman chaste, because he is a profligate: Every woman who favours him, confirms him in his wicked incredulity. He is always plotting to extend the mischiefs he delights in. If a woman loves such a man, how can she bear the thought of dividing her interest in his affections, with half the town, and that, perhaps, the dregs of it?—Then so sensual!—How will a young lady of your delicacy bear with so sensual a man? a man who makes a jest of his vows; and who, perhaps, will break your spirit by the most unmanly insults. To *be* a libertine, at setting out, all compunction, all humanity, must be overcome. To *continue* to be a libertine, is to continue to be every thing vile and inhuman. Prayers, tears, and the most abject submission, are but fuel to his pride: Wagering perhaps with lewd companions, and, not improbably, with lewder women, upon instances which he boasts of to them of your patient sufferings and broken spirit, and bringing them home to witness to both. I write what I know *has* been.

I mention not fortunes squander'd, estates mortgaged or sold, and posterity robb'd: Nor yet a multitude of other evils, too gross, too shocking, to be mentioned to a delicacy like yours.

All these, my dear cousin, to be shunn'd, all the evils I have named to be avoided; the power of doing all the good you have been accustomed to do, preserved, nay, increased, by the separate provision that will be made for you: Your charming diversions,

and exemplary employments all maintained; and every good habit perpetuated: And all by *one* sacrifice, the fading pleasure of the eye: Who would not (since every thing is not to be met with in one man; who would not) to preserve so many essentials, give up so light, so unpermanent a pleasure?

Weigh all these things, which I might insist upon to more advantage, did I think it needful to one of your prudence: Weigh them well, my beloved cousin; and if it be not the will of your parents that you should continue single, resolve to oblige them; and let it not be said, that the powers of fancy shall (as in many others of your sex) be too hard for your duty and your prudence. The less agreeable the man, the more obliging the compliance: Remember, that he is a sober man: A man who has reputation to lose, and whose reputation therefore is a security for his good behaviour to you.

You have an opportunity offer'd you, to give the highest instance that can be given, of filial duty:—Embrace it; it is worthy *of* you; it is expected *from* you; however, for your inclination sake, one may be sorry that you are called upon to give it. Let it be said, that you have been able to lay an obligation upon your parents (A proud word, my cousin!) which you could not do, were it not laid *against* your inclination!—Upon parents, who have laid a thousand upon you; who have given up many points to you, even of this very nature: And in *their* turn, for the sake of their own authority, as well as judgment, expect to be obliged.

I hope, I shall soon, in person, congratulate you upon This your meritorious compliance. To settle and give up my trusteeship, is one of the principal motives of my leaving these parts. I shall be glad to settle it, to every one's satisfaction; to Yours particularly. If on my arrival I find a happy union, as formerly, reign in a family so dear to me, it will be an unspeakable

unspeakable pleasure to me; and I shall perhaps so dispose my affairs, as to be near you for ever.

I have written a very long letter, and will add no more, than that I am, with the greatest respect, my dearest cousin,

Your most affectionate and faithful servant,

WM. MORDEN.

I will suppose, my dear Miss Howe, that you have read my cousin's letter. It is now in vain to wish it had come sooner. But if it had, I might perhaps have been so rash as to give Mr. Lovelace the fatal meeting, as I little thought of going off with him.

But I should hardly have given him the *expectation* of so doing, *previous* to the meeting, which made him come prepared; and the revocation of which he so artfully made ineffectual.

Persecuted as I was, and little expecting so much condescension, as my aunt, to my great mortification, has told me (and you confirm) that I should have met with, it is, however, hard to say, what I should or should not have done, as to meeting him, had it come in time: But this effect I verily believe it would have had,—To have made me insist with all my might, on going over, out of all their ways, to the kind writer of the instructive letter, and made a father, a protector, as well as a friend, of a cousin, who is one of my trustees. This, circumstanced as I was, would have been a natural, at least an unexceptionable protection.—But I was to be unhappy! And how it cuts me to the heart to think, that I can already subscribe to my cousin's character of a libertine, so well drawn in the letter which I suppose you now to have read!

That such a vile character, which ever was my abhorrence, should fall to my lot!—But depending on my own strength; having no reason to apprehend danger from headstrong and disgraceful impulses, I

too little, perhaps, cast up my eyes to the Supreme Director: In whom, mistrusting myself, I ought to have placed my whole confidence!—And the more, when I saw myself so persistingly addressed by a man of this character.

Inexperience and presumption, with the help of a brother and sister, who have low ends to answer in my disgrace, have been my *ruin*!—A hard word, my dear! But I repeat it upon deliberation: Since, let the best happen, which *now* can happen, my reputation is destroyed; a Rake is my portion: And what That portion is, my cousin Morden's letter has acquainted you.

Pray keep it by you, till called for. I saw it not myself (having not the heart to inspect my trunks) till this morning. I would not for the world This man should see it; because it might occasion mischief between the most violent spirit, and the most settled brave one, in the world, as my cousin's is said to be.

This letter was inclosed (opened) in a blank cover. Scorn and detest me as they will, I wonder that one line was not sent with it—were it but to have more particularly pointed the design of it, in the same generous spirit, that sent me the Spira.—The sealing of the cover was with black wax. I hope there is no new occasion in the family to give reason for black wax. But if there were, it would, to be sure, have been mention'd, and laid at my door—perhaps too justly!

I had begun a letter to my cousin; but laid it by, because of the uncertainty of my situation, and expecting every-day, for several days past, to be at a greater certainty. You bid me write to him, some time ago, you know. Then it was I began it: For I have great pleasure in obeying you in all I may. So I ought to have; for you are the only friend left me: And moreover, you generally honour me with your own observance of the advice I take the liberty to offer

offer you: For I pretend to say, I give better advice than I have taken. And so I had need. For, I know not how it comes about, but I am, in my own opinion, a poor lost creature: And yet cannot charge myself with one criminal or faulty inclination. Do you know, my dear, how This can be?

Yet I can tell you *how*, I believe:—One devious step at setting out!—That must be it:—Which pursued, has led me so far out of my path, that I am in a wilderness of doubt and error; and never, never, shall find my way out of it: For, altho' but one pace awry at first, he has led me hundreds and hundreds of miles out of my path: And the poor estray has not one kind friend, nor has met with one directing passenger, to help her to recover it.

But I, presumptuous creature! must rely so much upon my own knowledge of the right path!—little apprehending that an *ignis fatuus* with its false fires (and yet I had heard enough of such) would arise to mislead me! And now, in the midst of fens and quagmires, it plays around me, and around me, throwing me back again, whenever I think myself in the right track.—But there is one common point, in which all shall meet, err widely as they may. In That I shall be laid quietly down at last: And then will all my calamities be at end.

But how I stray again; stray from my intention! I would only have said, that I had begun a letter to my cousin Morden some time ago: But that, now, I can never end it. You will believe I cannot: For how shall I tell him, that all his compliments are misbestowed: That all his advice is thrown away: All his warnings vain: And that even my highest expectation is to be the wife of that free liver, whom he so pathetically warns me to shun?

Let me, however, have your prayers joined with my own, (my fate depending, as it seems, upon the lips of such a man), 'That, whatever shall be my
' destiny,

‘ destiny, That dreadful part of my father’s malediction, That I may be punished by the man in whom he supposes I put my confidence, may not take place! That This for *Mr. Lovelace’s* own sake, and for the sake of *human nature*, may not be!—Or, if it be necessary, in support of the parental authority, that I should be punished by *him*, that it may not be by his *premeditated* or *wilful* baseness; but that I may be able to acquit his *intention*, if not his *action*!’ Otherwise, my fault will appear to be doubled in the eye of the event-judging world. And yet, methinks, I would be glad, that the unkindness of my father and uncles, whose hearts have already been too much wounded by my error, may be justify’d in every article, excepting in this heavy curse: And that my father will be pleased to withdraw That, before it be generally known, at least that most dreadful part of it, which regards futurity!

I must lay down my pen: I must brood over these reflections: Once more, before I inclose my cousin’s letter, I will peruse it: And then I shall have it by heart.

END of VOL. III.

10 JA 67

